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PREVIEW

New York's Top Oscar Contenders

ON HOWARD MESSES
WITH RUSSELL CROWE'S
'A BEAUTIFUL MIND'

ROBERT ALTMAN DISHES
'OSFORD PARK' FROM HIS
TABLE AT ELAINE'S

ASSE HALLSTRÖM PUTS
EVIN SPACEY ON ICE IN
'THE SHIPPING NEWS'

ESSIE NELSON SHOWS
JEAN PENN'S SOFTER SIDE
IN 'I AM SAM'

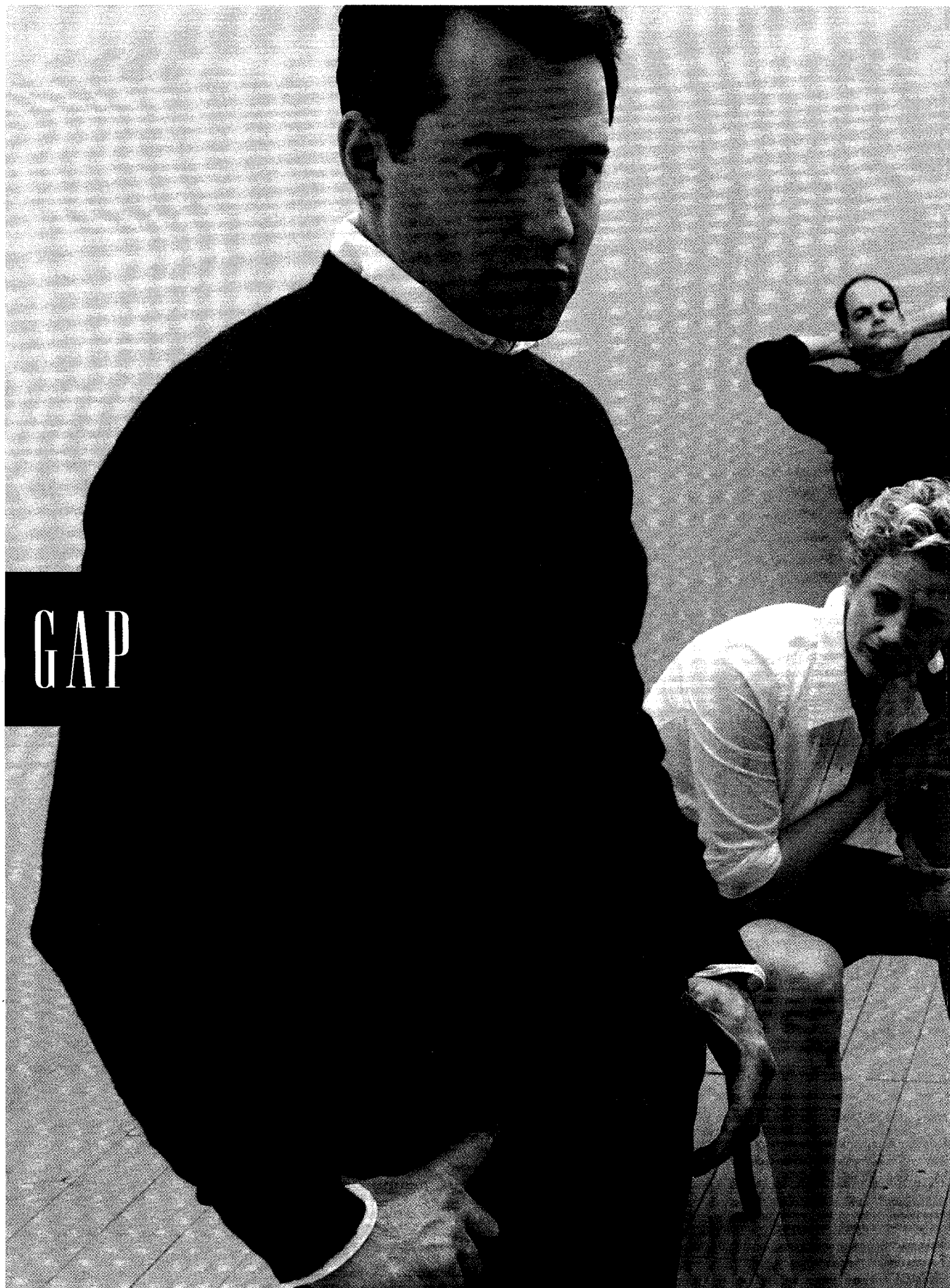
NEW LINE: THE BOLD
OVERS BEHIND 'THE LORD
' OF THE RINGS'

GENIUS AT WORK
Russell Crowe, star
of 'A Beautiful Mind.'

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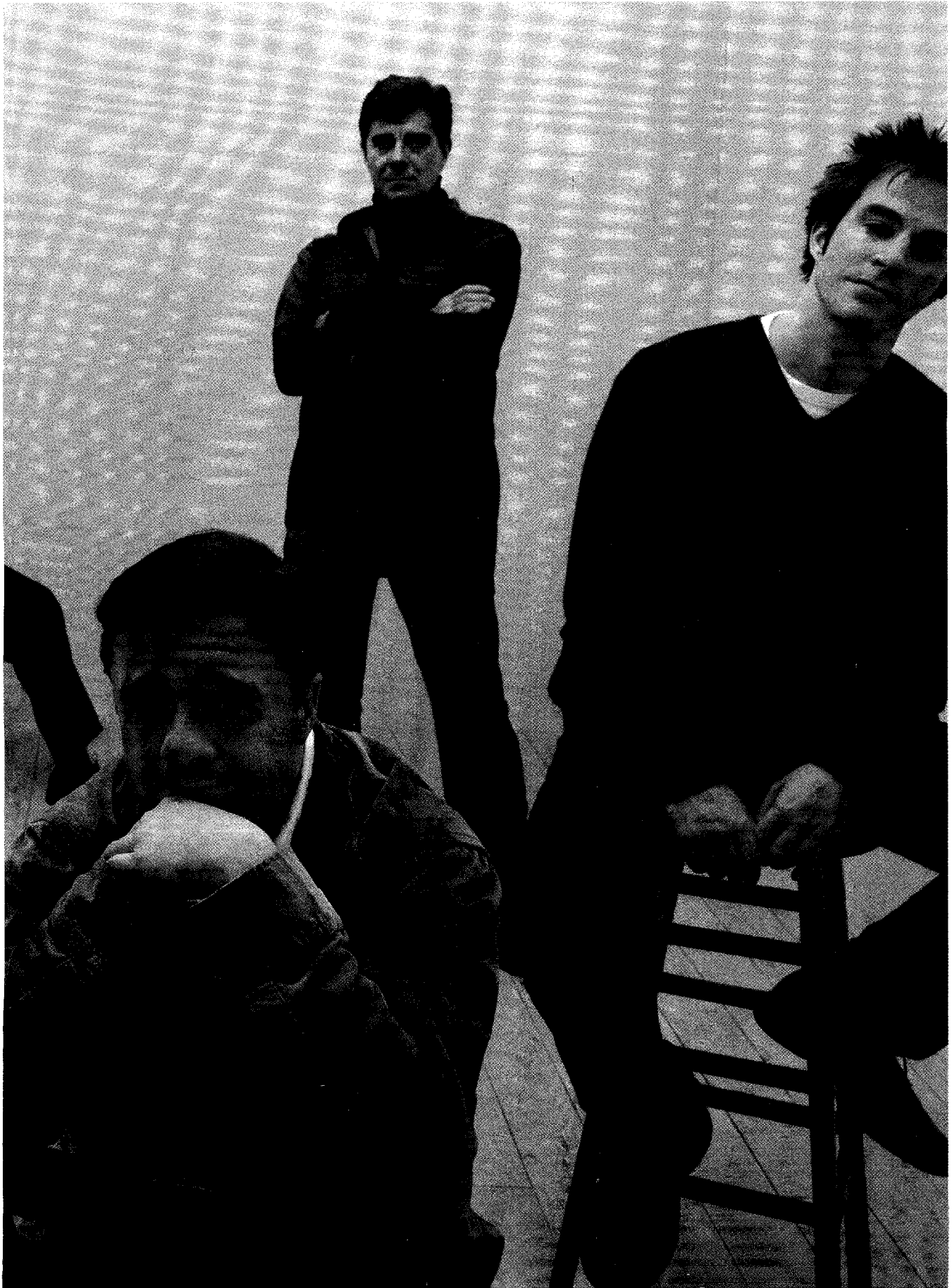
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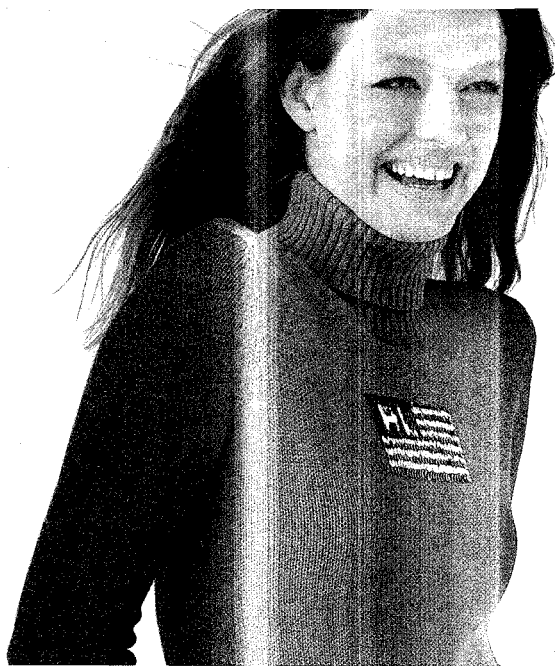
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gifted. cast of "The Producers"

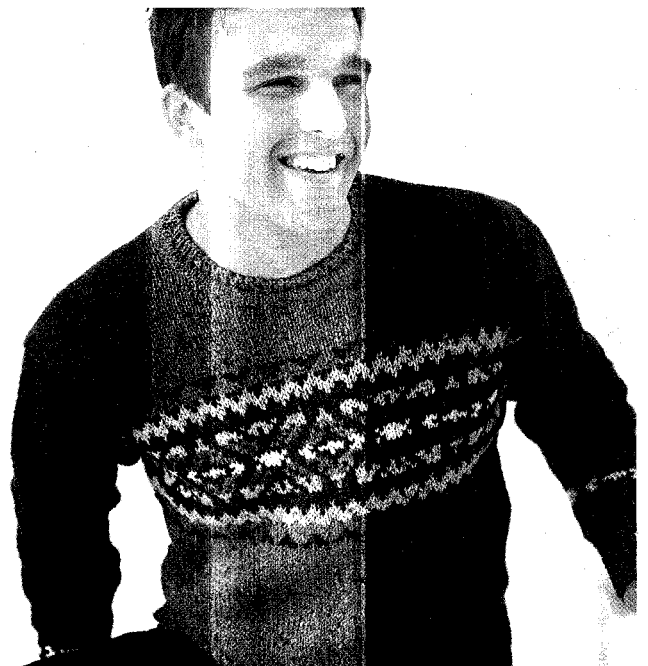


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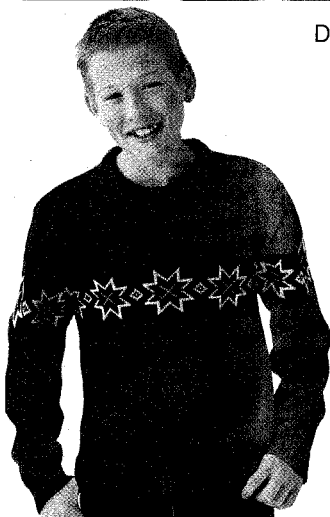
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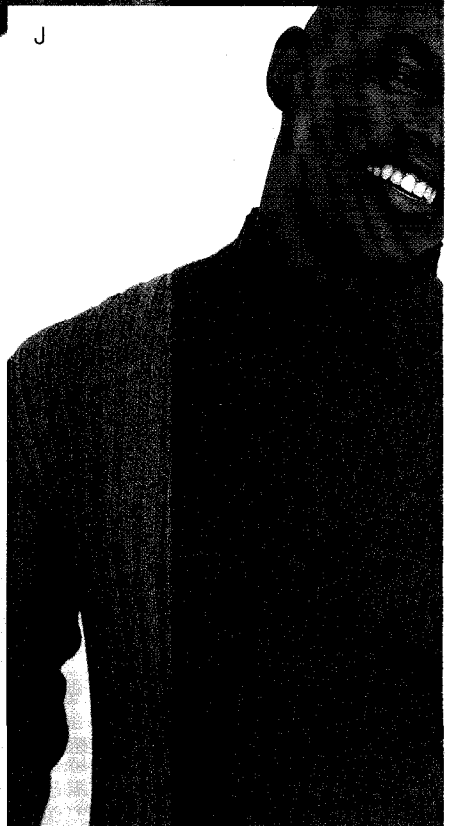
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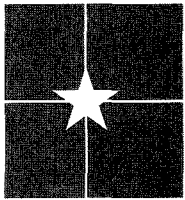


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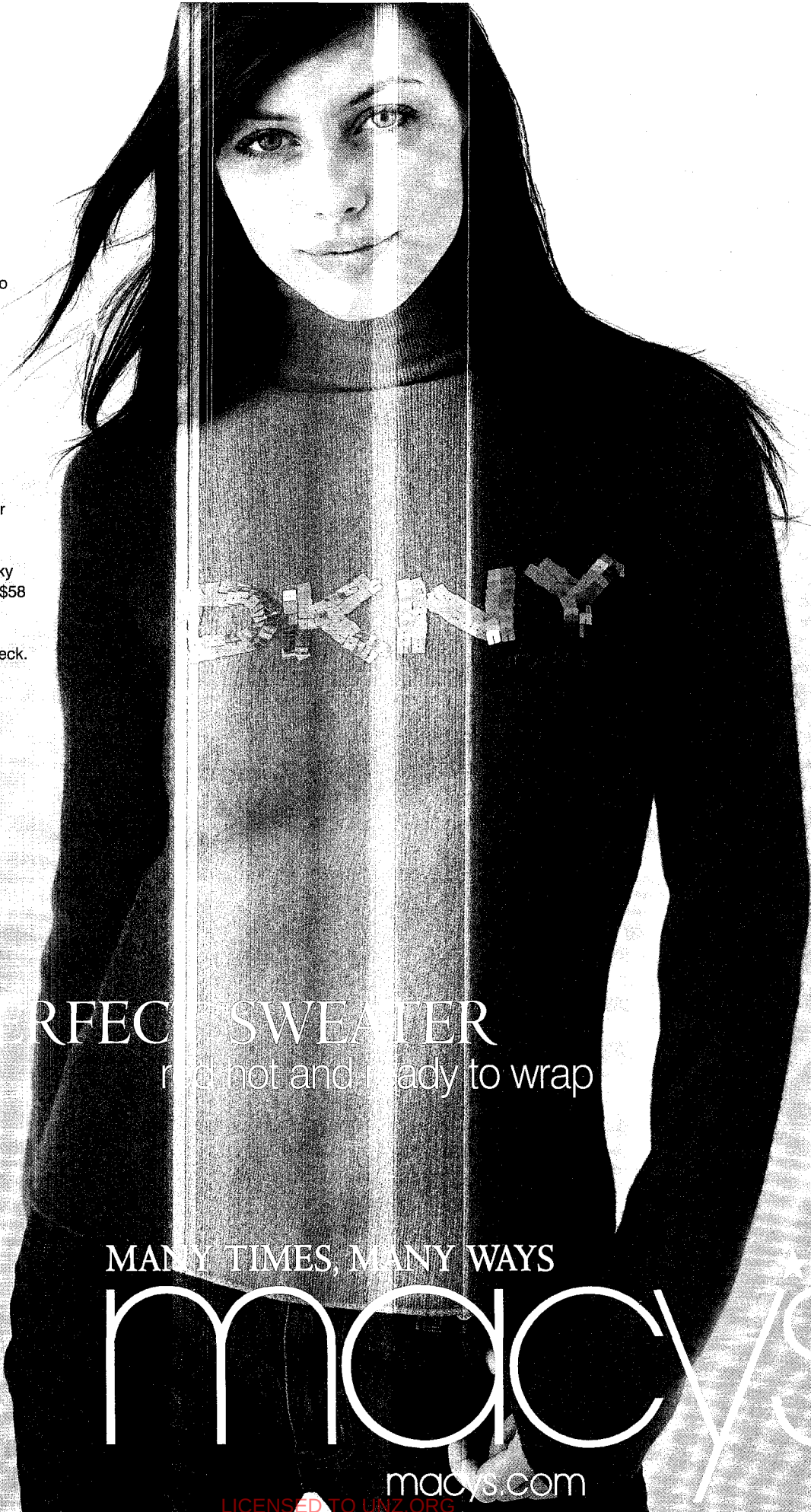
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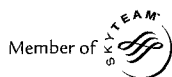
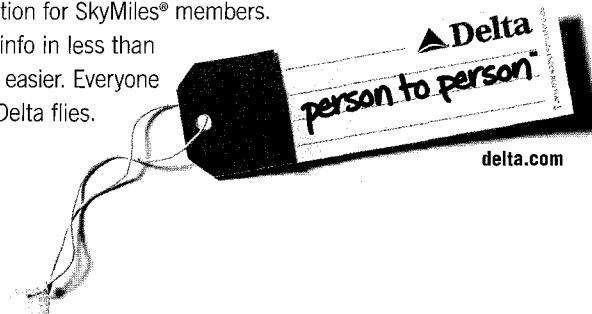
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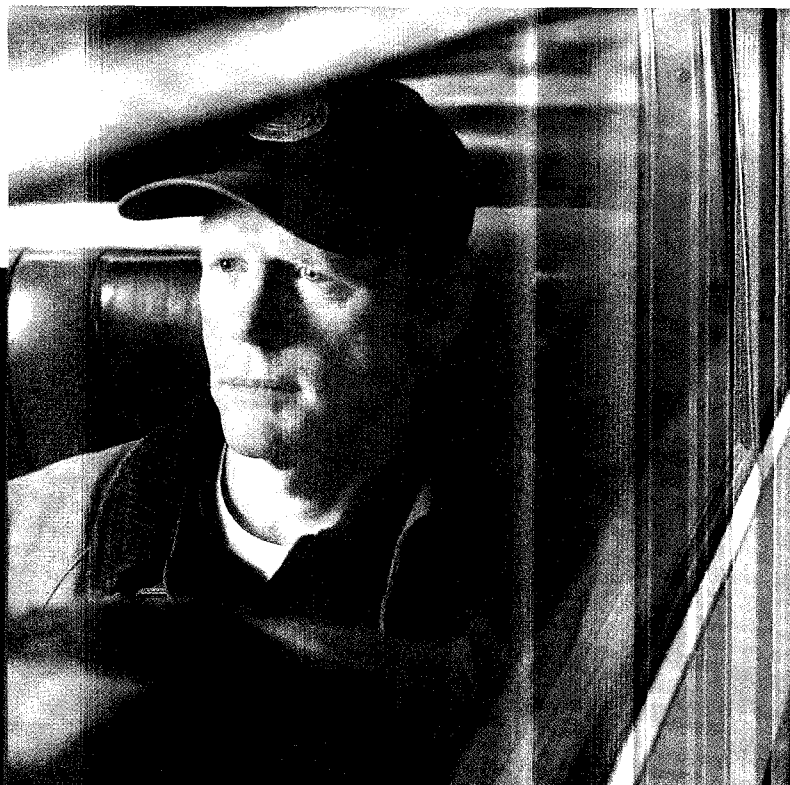
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'Guardian' Crossword



Although I'm not a genius, unfortunately, I'm ambitious
and I think I can do better.

—Ron Howard, page 38

30 The Osama Prophet By Robert Kolker

John O'Neill, a charter member of the Elaine's crime-fighting posse, was widely regarded as the FBI's foremost authority on Osama bin Laden. When he resigned in August, his ambitions thwarted, he thought he was off the terrorism front line. The job he took? World Trade Center security chief. When he died in the attack, he left behind a wife, a girlfriend, two sets of kids who called him dad, and a giant question: Why weren't his warnings heeded?

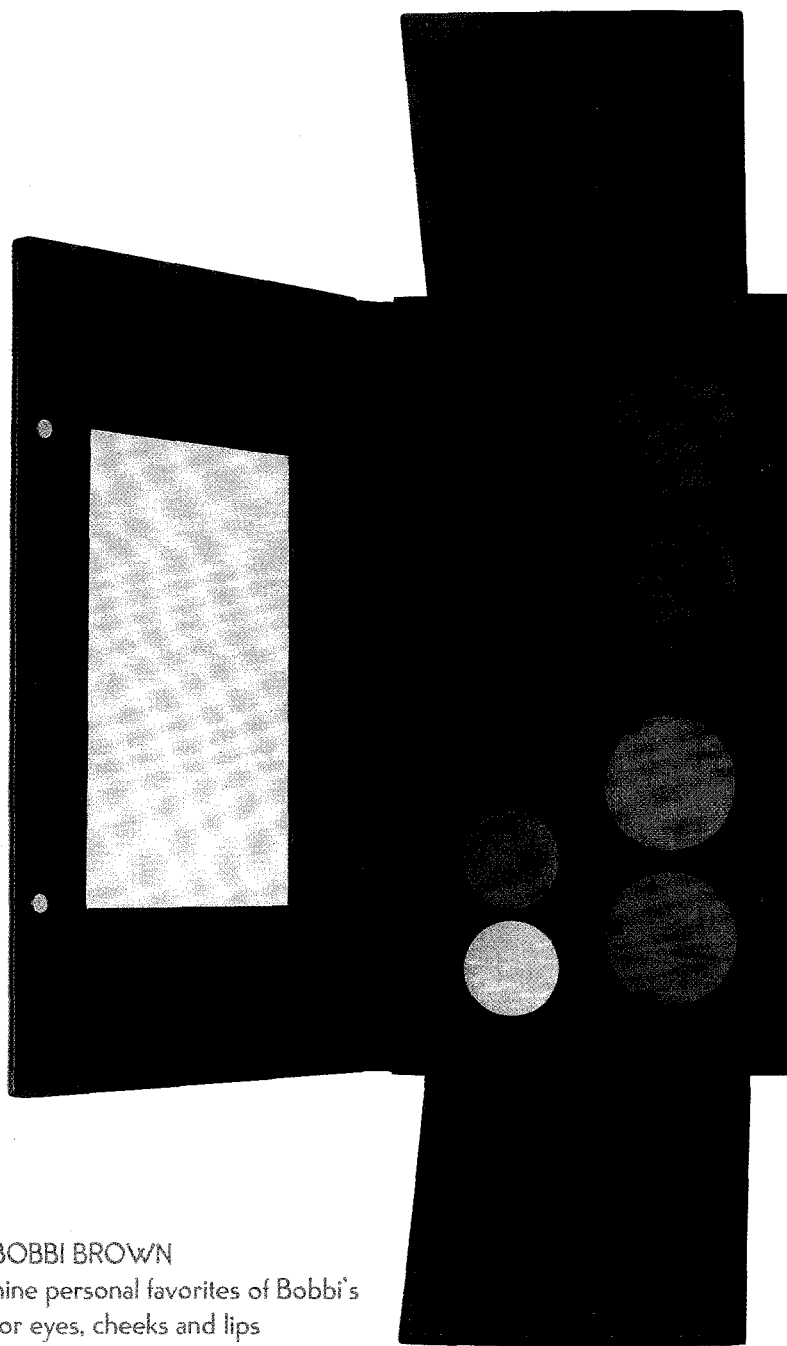
36 Hollywood at Home

36 ALMOST FAMOUS Director Ron Howard has been well-known since the age of 6, so it's surprising no one seems to know he's a New Yorker. But his new movie, *A Beautiful Mind*, about a troubled Princeton genius, will strike absolutely no one as a typical Hollywood project. 40 MY DINNER WITH BOB Robert Altman (next up: the star-studded *Gosford Park*) says the streets and salons of this city inform every film he's made. He says it over a six-hour dinner. At Elaine's. • 44 IN THE RING Deciding to fund and shoot all three segments of *The Lord of the Rings* in one mammoth, \$270 million chunk, seems, well, a little risky. But New Line's longtime partners, Bob Shaye and Michael Lynne, see it as "prudent aggression": the only way to fulfill their epic quest. • 46 THE FULL NELSON / *Am Sam* was a three-hanky project about a retarded father's battle to keep his child. But New York-theater-bred Jessie Nelson saw a chance to make a "left of center" film. • 49 A NOVEL IDEA Swedish director Lasse Hallström settled happily in Westchester after a painful detour in Hollywood. But his films, including the much-anticipated *Shipping News*, are still fascinated with the rootless, the outcasts, the lost.

ON THE COVER: PHOTOGRAPH BY YARIV MILCHAN.

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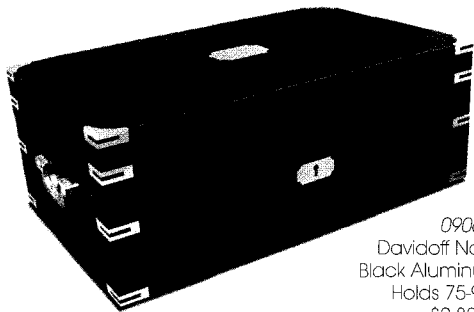
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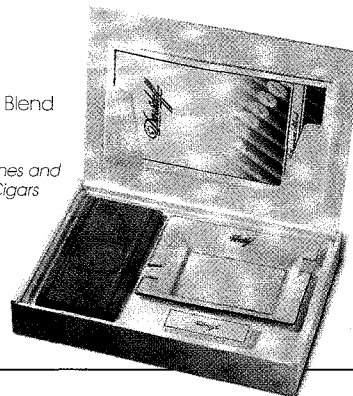
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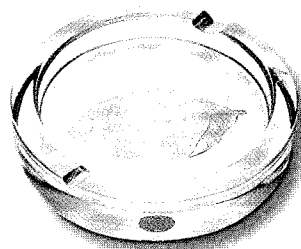


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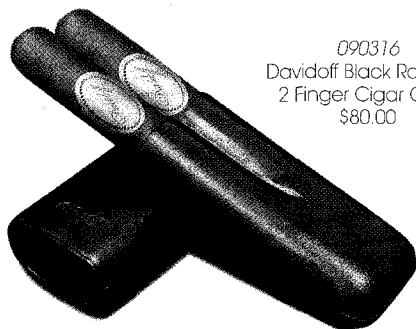
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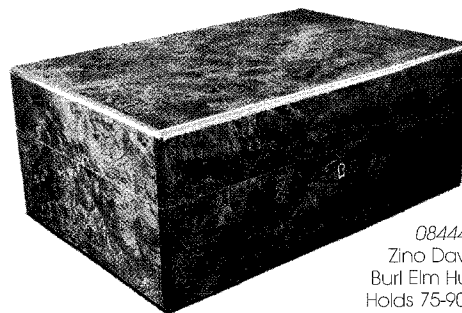
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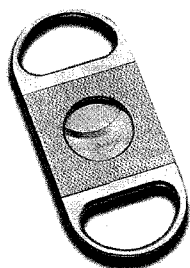
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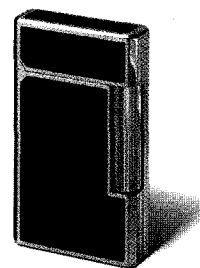


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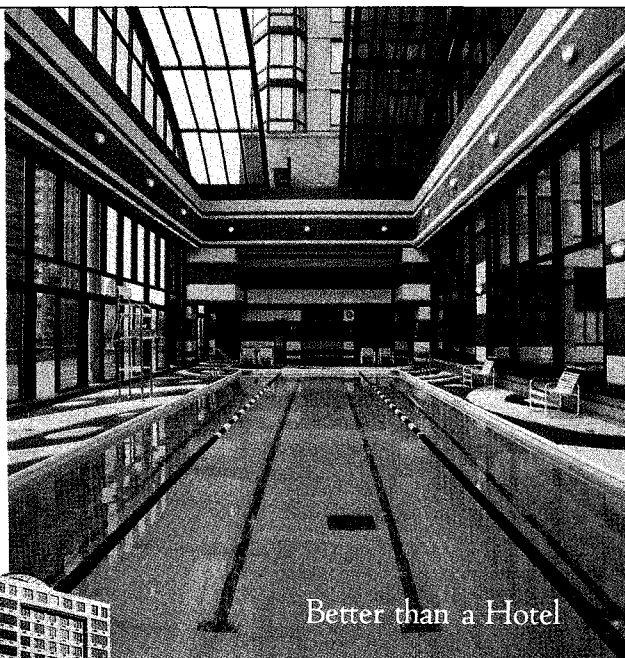
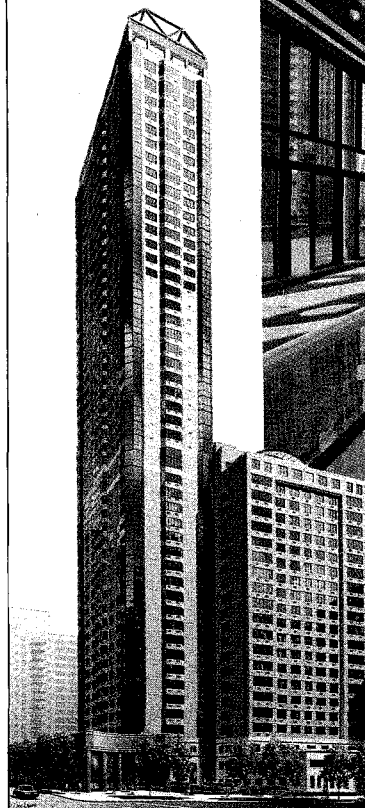
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Letters

How yoga is practiced and taught always reflects the society and culture that surround it.

— Mitchell Wolf

Twist and Shout

The practice of yoga in all its forms has been around for a very long time, and has gone through endless transformations ["Flex Appeal," by Vanessa Grigoriadis, November 19]. One thing remains consistent: How yoga is practiced and taught always reflects the society and culture that surround it. What is being passed off as yoga today is often nothing more than exercise with exotic trappings, taught by people with extremely limited training. Rest assured, yoga will survive this period, too. It will continue to mutate, as it always has, but there will be those who preserve the essence of its teachings, the ethical disciplines that guide us in how to live in peace and harmony with all beings on this planet. Isn't that what we really need now?

Mitchell Wolf, MANHATTAN

I am always hopeful that American yogis will teach that the true aim of yoga is to realize your higher self and that the *asana* (physical) practice is a small part of that. Thanks for exposing it to your readers.

Russell Simmons, CHAIRMAN, RUSH COMMUNICATIONS, MANHATTAN

Ah, yoga, the running craze of the nineties, without the pounding. Why is there such a need for this now? Because the teacher appears when the student is ready. We are all looking for spiritual fulfillment. The events of September 11 just sped up our need tenfold. When I practice yoga, I become present in the moment, unconcerned with the past or the future. This is a blissful place. The only thing that comes close to this experience is when I hold my newborn granddaughter and smell that special scent of the first six weeks of life. This is the perfume of G-d. It is the most intoxicating experience, the closest we get to the All-Powerful Presence. Yoga, when practiced correctly, can bring one back to this G-dlike moment, one we all lose at 2

or 3. *Namaste* (I acknowledge the divine presence within each of us).

Mitchell Proffman, QUEENS

Vanessa Grigoriadis's article glorifies those looking for the secret shortcut, the novel technique, the exciting new trend in the area of self-development. In its uncorrupted, noncommercial form, yoga is a path that has survived uninterrupted for over 30 centuries despite major political, economic, and religious upheavals. It has endured precisely because of its untainted simplicity. Celebrities and spiritual propagandists are well represented in the article, but nowhere do we find any trace of the simple and subtle beauty and wisdom available to us through the handful of masters among us who are living and teaching the true path of yoga.

Scott Gerson, M.D., MEDICAL DIRECTOR, CLINICAL SERVICES, THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINE, MANHATTAN

If Martians ever land in New York and begin wondering about this thing called yoga and the current fascination with it, I hope they do not rely on your cover story. If the purpose of this piece was to address the rich, famous, and fashionable, and make them feel better about their obsession with getting and spending—as they complete another round of *asanas*—then it has hit its mark. A chill went through me as Russell Simmons cited the Bhagavad Gita, surely one of the world's most sacred and revered texts, before adding, "I love that shit." You do the New York City yoga community a disservice by suggesting it is populated largely by Madonna wannabes.

Janet Aschkenasy, MANHATTAN

Clerical Error

You did a great disservice to a great man when you stated Father Mychal Judge was gay ["The Fireman's Friar," by Jennifer Senior, November 12]. He was a saintly man and a devout priest and therefore celibate. If he stated or intimated he was gay, I believe he meant it in a spiritual way, as he wanted to share the anguish and disdain that gays

have to put up with because all people are not as understanding as was Father Judge. I felt you put it in for shock effect, and the fire commissioner's statement did not alleviate your pronouncement.

Joseph Curry, RETIRED DEPUTY CHIEF, FDNY, HUNTINGTON, N.Y.

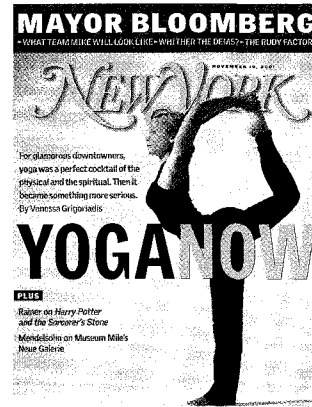
Thought for Food

I recently had the good fortune to be invited to a birthday party in the

Poconos, where the kitchen smelled glorious with your "perfect pot roast" ["Holiday Entertaining: We Gather Together," by Gillian Duffy, November 12]. Everyone raved about the delicious roast. On the way home I called my daughter-in-law in Charlotte, North Carolina, and she told me she was making a pot of the bean soup she had seen in your article on comfort food. "The best I've ever eaten," my son reported later. Subsequently, my other son and daughter-in-law invited me to Brooklyn to share Thanksgiving with them. She wanted to try your roasted chicken. All three yummy-sounding recipes turned out to be yummy-tasting. The mushroom caps stuffed with chestnuts and apple are on the menu for a cocktail party I'm having next Sunday.

Martha Bennett, BASKING RIDGE, N.J.

Correction: In our December 3 issue, a photo caption mislocated Congressman Anthony Weiner in the Rockaways ["Life of the Party," by James Burnett]. In fact, he was in Sheepshead Bay. ■



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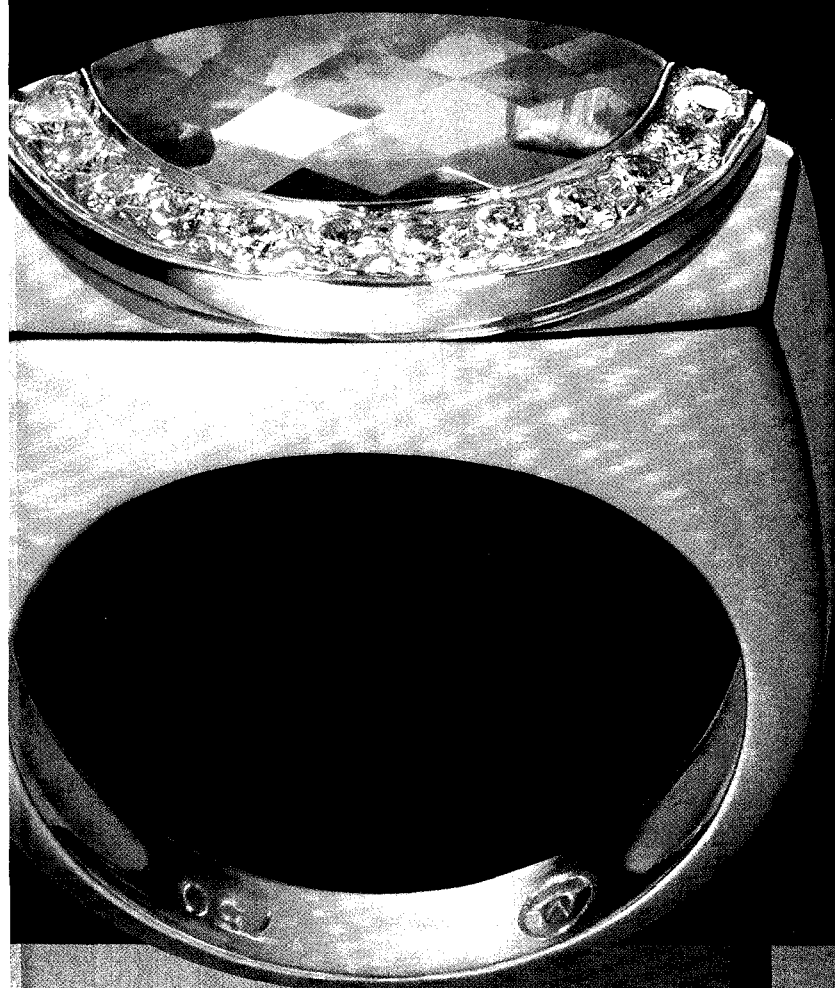
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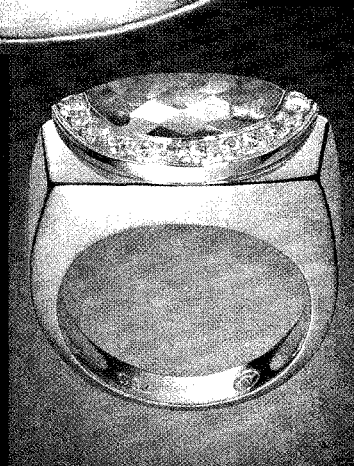
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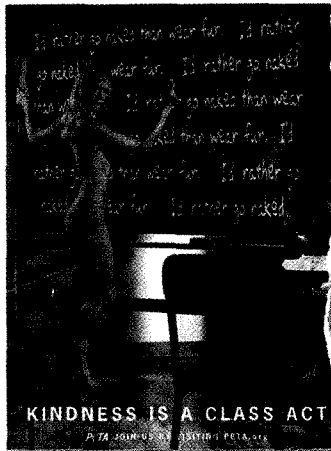
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Intelligencer

By Marc S. Malkin

Liz Taylor Gets Wiggy With It

People magazine's plan for a museum inside the Time-Life Building was scrapped earlier this year in order to give the space to CNN for use as a studio. But **Ann S. Moore**, the Time Inc. VP who spearheaded the project, isn't giving up. She expects to open the museum after CNN moves to the new AOL Time Warner headquarters at Columbus Circle sometime in 2004, and hopes that the museum's original opening exhibit—a display of all eight of **Elizabeth Taylor's** wedding dresses along with much of her famed jewelry collection—will be revived, too. "That was the hardest call I had to make," Moore told us at *People's* Heroes Among Us luncheon last week, "to call Elizabeth Taylor and say, 'Sorry, we don't need your diamonds.'" *People* didn't take everything Taylor was willing to give, however. Moore says she turned down the actress's offer of 200 of



Dominique Swain Bares Her Beliefs

It looks like **Dominique Swain**—who first gained notoriety as the lead in *Lolita*, the 1997 film that debuted in the U.S. on Showtime after its pedophilic plot proved too controversial for theater distributors—isn't shying away from pushing the envelope. The 21-year-old actress is baring all for the latest installment of PETA's "I'd Rather Go Naked Than Wear Fur" campaign, which has previously featured **Pamela Anderson**, **Kim Basinger**, **Cindy Crawford**, **Melissa Etheridge**, and **Christy Turlington**. The ad features the starlet au naturel, scribbling the mantra on a chalkboard, with a tag line reading KINDNESS IS A CLASS ACT. "I love animals—I used to wear my ferret as a live stole," says Swain, "and if all I have to do to raise awareness is strip naked, then so be it." Despite the ad's risqué image, PETA has managed to get a high school to host the official unveiling this week in Los Angeles, where an audience of Venice High School students will also watch an anti-fur video hosted by designer **Todd Oldham**. "It's the opposite end of the spectrum for me," the *Lolita* star jokes. "Most of my fan base so far has been 50-year-old men." Another party—co-sponsored by babes-and-beer magazine *Gear*—is scheduled to take place soon at Spa.

the wigs she stored at her house in Switzerland.

Elliott Gould: Love and the First Degree

Elliott Gould's father, **Bernard Goldstein**, must be smiling in heaven. Soon after Gould learned that his dad—who passed away in 1988—dropped out of Brooklyn's New Utrecht High School in the 1930s, he also was told about New York State legislation that guarantees a diploma to any veteran of World War II or the Korean War. Gould recently sent a copy of his dad's honorable

discharge papers—he was an Army sharpshooter in WWII—to New Utrecht. He received the diploma the day after Thanksgiving. "He left school in 1931, and he graduated in 2001," Gould told us with a laugh. "My father wasn't an academic, but he was really sensitive and very talented. I just wanted to give him something that he earned."

POETRY IN MOTION: We hear that people behind the Families of Freedom Fund, a scholarship program backed by **Bill Clinton** and **Bob Dole**

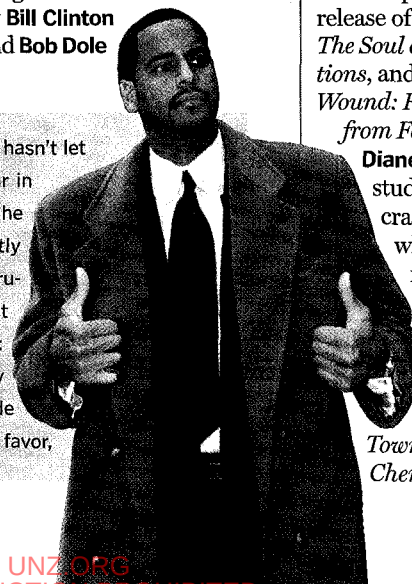
for children of September 11 victims, are shopping around a book of poems, written and illustrated by children, about freedom. Actress **Hallie Kate Eisenberg**, 9, of *The Women*, and 15-year-old singer **Charlotte Church** have already signed up to contribute. Court TV's **Catherine Crier** will select what will be included in the book.

PENETRATING THOUGHTS: **Deepak Chopra** offered some interesting reflections on war and missiles last week. During Rasa Music founder **Donna D'Cruz's** party celebrating the release of Chopra's new CD, *The Soul of Healing Meditations*, and book, *The Deeper Wound: Recovering the Soul from Fear and Suffering*, at **Diane von Furstenberg's** studio, the spiritual guru cracked, "You know what a missile reminds you of—a huge, huge phallic symbol of destruction."

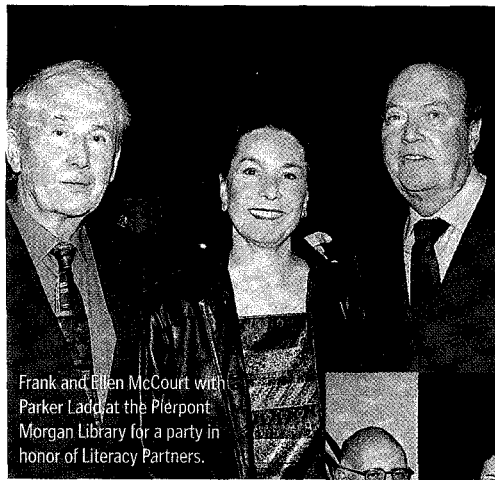
With Catherine Townsend and Aric Chen.

Jayson Williams: Tippy at Veruka

NBC basketball commentator and former New Jersey Net **Jayson Williams** hasn't let an alleged late-night run-in last month with a police officer outside a bar in Branchburg, New Jersey (witnesses say he pushed the cop; Williams insists he didn't), put a crimp in his nightlife. A source tells us that Williams recently shelled out \$10,000 in tips in the early-morning hours at **Noel Ashman's** Veruka. He handed over the wad of cash to a manager and told him to split it among the night's staff. Williams's lawyer, **Oscar Holt III**, verified the story: "It's the holidays." And that's not all. Holt also confirmed our tipster's story that Williams recently gave \$5,000 to about four homeless people outside Veruka a few weeks ago. Holt says, "His friend had just paid him back for a favor, but Jayson said, 'Let me just give it to someone who needs it.'"



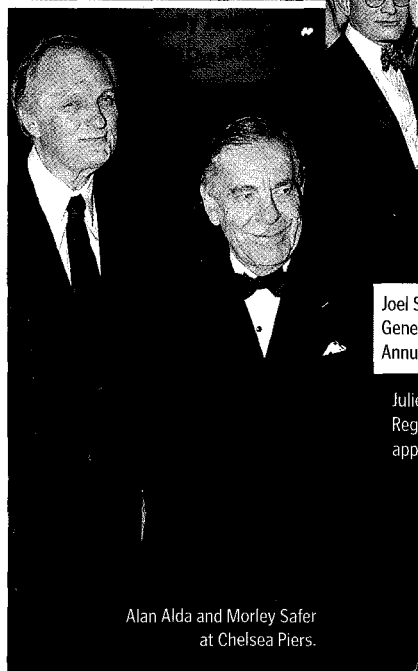
Scene



Frank and Ellen McCourt with Parker Ladd at the Pierpont Morgan Library for a party in honor of Literacy Partners.



Nadja Swarovski and Rupert Adams at the Union Club celebrating their engagement.



Joel Sesser, Rosie O'Donnell, Lee Grant, and Gene Wilder at the Plaza for Gilda's Club's Annual Comedy Gala.



Julien Macdonald and Lisa Marie at the St. Regis for a party in honor of Macdonald's appointment as artistic director of Givenchy.



Jennifer Coolidge at the Lenox Hill Capital Autumn Ball.



Maggie Smith, Helen Mirren, and Emily Watson at the *Gosford Park* premiere.



Mariska Hargitay, Nancy Ellison, Rosanna Arquette, and Marisa Berenson at a party for Ellison's new book, *Starlet*.



Julian Niccolini, Dan Aykroyd, Bobby Kennedy Jr., and Drew Nieporent at the Plaza for the Food Allergy Ball.

Double Take

Movie studios often charter buses for their premieres, but at the December 3 opening of **Robert Altman's** *Gosford Park*, USA Films raised the bar: Double-decker buses took guests from the Ziegfeld to the Boathouse. ("Be careful of low-hanging branches and street lights," the driver advised actress **Jennifer Coolidge**.) At the party, **Julian Schnabel**, **Jennifer Jason Leigh**, and **Harry Belafonte** mingled. And **Ryan Phillippe** discussed his role: "I wanted my Scottish accent to be purposefully imperfect," he said, cuddling with wife **Reese Witherspoon**. He stopped as **Keith**

Richards passed. "Incredible. Can you believe that's actually him?" **DAVID AMSDEN**

Weird Science

The New York Hall of Science benefit at Chelsea Piers on November 28 resembled a high-school science fair. **Bill Rudin**

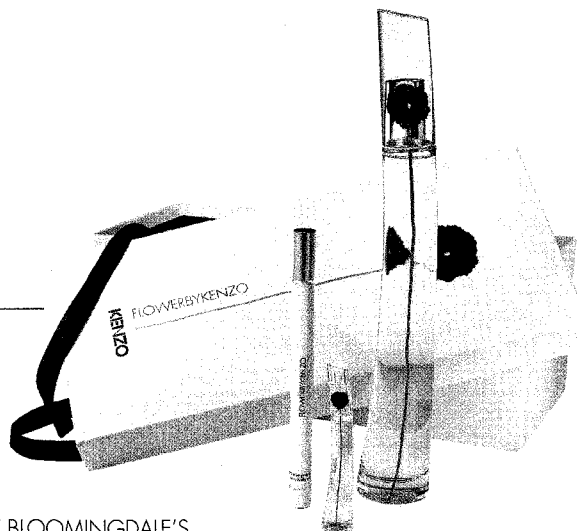
had his DNA sampled. ("Good to know it's intact," he said.) **Mark Green** teamed up with **Harold O. Levy**, **Morley Safer**, **Jack Rosenthal**, and **David Komansky** to try out the Virtual Tug of War machine. "I couldn't see who we were pulling against," Safer recalled. "But God, it was relentless." And **Alan Alda** detailed his preparation for the role of physics genius Richard Feynman in *"QED"*: "I was an inventor when I was 9 or 10, made a five-way can opener that never worked." His experimental nature notwithstanding, Alda still wasn't prepared to accept glow sticks, the evening's ubiquitous accessory: "I don't wear them. I think they're radioactive." **JADA YUAN**

Photographs
by **Patrick McMullan**

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THE POPPY HOLIDAYS GIFT SET IS AVAILABLE AT BLOOMINGDALE'S

GOTHAM

Life in the New City

That's All, Folks!

Is Gerald Levin making for the exit at just the right moment? By David Carr

What does it mean when a corporate visionary like AOL Time Warner CEO Gerald Levin—a guy with a reputation for seeing over the hill—looks into the future and decides he doesn't want to be a part of it? In the surprise retirement party he threw for himself last week, Levin indicated over and over that recent events made running a company seem, well, beside the point. But what if other, more mundane forces were at work?

Levin's unexpected exit could mean that he knows that the next couple of years will not be nearly as bright or bold as he once predicted. "This is typical Levin," says an editor at one of the company's magazines. "He made this move when he had enough time left on his contract to control succession." Retiring in May, a year and a half ahead of schedule, also gives him credit for the biggest media merger ever, while—just for instance—allowing him to forgo significant blame if all of those parts don't play well together.

Last January, Levin called the merged behemoth "a big monetization machine," but almost a year later it looks a

lot more like an ad-driven company in the deepest media recession in years. Revenue growth has been half of what the company promised and the stock is down 23 percent. (The overall Dow is down 4 percent.)

"A lot of us who know Jerry are wondering what he knows that we don't," says a senior executive in the publishing division. In other words, when it comes to Jerry, the timing might also be a little scary.

Close observers at the company pooch-pooch the idea that Levin is getting out while the getting's good, suggesting that he'd hardly name Time Warner guy (and personal friend) Richard Parsons CEO if there were a booby trap waiting. "I don't think it is anything but a personal decision," says Jessica Reif Cohen of Merrill Lynch, who has followed the company and Levin for some time.

Parsons's ascension over AOL's Robert Pittman, his co-COO, has been cast as the triumph of old media over new, of New York over Virginia. But it makes sense for the times: Parsons has become king because content is. In the vapor trail of September 11, concerns like gross revenues seem, well,

gross. Levin has spent a lot of time recently talking about the company's "sacred trust" as national storyteller.

It may be doing a good job of covering the biggest story in years, but AOL Time Warner still faces significant problems with its online service, which Levin called the "crown jewel" of the merger.

The plan to make AOL Time Warner a roach motel for consumers, a sticky village that would be easy to get into and hard to get out of, seems to be proceeding, but no one is spending money to reach those consumers.

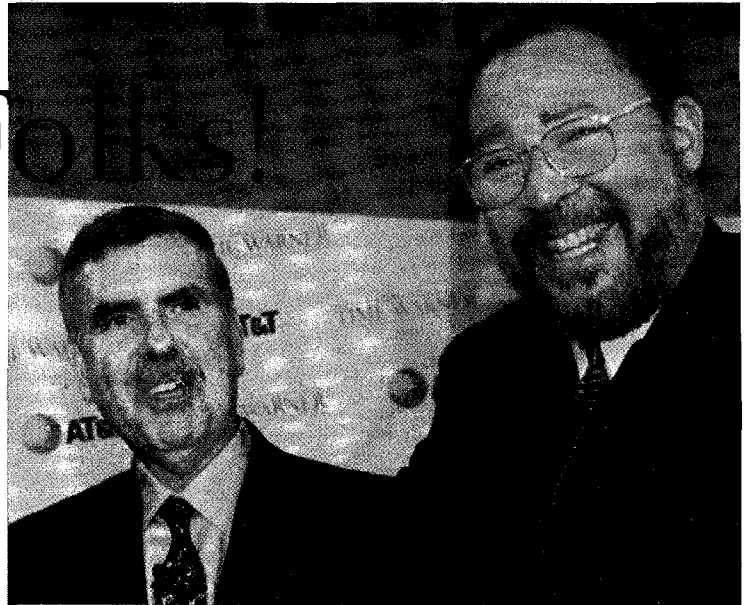
"It is a great marketing machine, but advertising and commerce revenues are falling down dramatically and subscriber growth is difficult because it's working off a bigger base," says Cohen. The cost of acquiring those subscribers—freebies, promotions—is going up. Even though AOL actually raised prices back in July by two bucks, it's making less

money per subscriber. And it's running out of seducible Luddites—most people know what the Internet is and have already decided either to use it or to ignore it.

But that's not Levin's problem anymore. There's more to life, he told the *Wall Street Journal*, than being a master of the universe: "I'm my own person. I have strong moral convictions. I'm not just a suit. I want poetry back in my life."

Some of the poetry is rendered in dark hues. Levin arranged to have an out clause in his contract after his son Jonathan—a high-school teacher—was murdered by a former student in 1997, an event that left him fundamentally changed. Levin said that September 11 reminded him again that life is short.

"He is leaving on his own terms and his own time," says Scott Cleland, CEO of the Precursor Group. "Not many people get to choose their exit."



Ho Ho-Hum

Yes, Virginia, there is no corporate Santa Claus this year—which means no free cocktails and trays of hors d'oeuvre for a thirsty and hungry city. With heavy-weights like Bloomberg and HBO cancelling their annual fêtes, and even high party priestess Martha Stewart scaling back, employees across the city are finding that festivities aren't quite matching those of office holiday parties past.

On Wall Street, where Cristal once flowed at Christmas, less-lavish bashes are a reminder of leaner times. Lehman Brothers, still working out of temporary offices in New Jersey, is throwing its first-ever companywide party, instead of

letting each department go wild like last year. The invitation outlines the party's bus system, stating, "Please help make the evening a success by not ordering a car on your own."

"Our group is also having a \$50 party at a pub," says one employee. "But I'm not shelling out the cash to drink with my co-workers."

Up at Proskauer Rose, where some lawyers are still upset by a round of layoffs, the planned festivities are bringing little cheer: "We're having our department party at 4 P.M. in the conference room," says one associate, who longingly recalls the intra-office mingling at last year's dinner at swanky B. Smith's. "An afternoon party? Obviously, there won't



be alcohol. I'm not going."

Thus far, though, the complaining has been surprisingly moderate. There's a recession on, after all—not to mention a war. But the silence, it must be said, sometimes has to do with fear. "Basically, they are just looking for excuses to fire us right now," says one Wall Streeter.

Dot-com galas were already scaled back in winter 2000; now, of course, nary a mouse is stirring. Razorfish, which once sent 300 em-

ployees on a citywide scavenger hunt in limousines, will likely enlist its own staffers (who now number 150) to D.J. and decorate. "We have a lot of talented young people we can tap into," says corporate communications director David LaBar. "We might even do the catering ourselves."

If companies are worried about eggnog's bottom line, they're also struggling with what kind of event is appropriate to throw this year. The advertising firm Kirshenbaum Bond, located on Varick Street, decided to dedicate its party to supporting downtown businesses; they'll be raffling off meals at local restaurants and other prizes. "We're not having a big garish event," says Richard Kirshenbaum. "We're not worried about fancy hors d'oeuvre and decor."

Last holiday season, *Glamour* staffers belted out Britney Spears tunes at a private karaoke party at Moomba. But this year, "it's back to the basics," says deputy editor Alison Brower, who's planned a simple get-together in the loft at Fressen.

Still, some New Yorkers insist a raucous party is just what this holiday season calls for: "Everything was rough enough," says Jean-Marc Houmard, an owner of BondSt, who's planning a blowout for 500 to 600 people, complete with roving drag queens to scold naughty staffers. "People are taking too long to get back to normal." **ABBY TEGNELIA**

High Anxiety

True, everything has changed, but *marijuana*, too? "I've noticed that my bags of weed have gotten smaller and smaller since September 11," says one user, "and they're a lot more expensive too." Pot-induced paranoia? Not necessarily.

If the war on terror is making us safer (and more anxious), with stepped-up surveillance everywhere, it's also doing something the war on drugs never quite did: putting a serious crimp in the drug supply. "Our \$50 bags are now \$60 bags," says a runner for a Bronx-based marijuana ring, "and we're weighing the product *with* stems." Of course, some dealers might just be capitalizing on drought fears. "Dealers are smart," says New York City Special Narcotics Prosecutor Bridget G. Brennan. "They're going to raise prices for real reasons *and* for pretend reasons."

Still, many drug-smuggling operations have seen real collateral damage from America's new war: Last week, the DEA reported a 29 percent increase in drug seizures at the border in October compared to last year. One Manhattan dealer says he's unable to get ketamine, the an-

imal anesthetic-cum-party drug, which comes in bulky glass bottles. "My distributor used to pay off a guy at the Canadian border," he says, "but that's not working now. There are too many people watching over him."

Back at home, high-profile busts have heightened users'—and dealers'—anxiety: Recently, Brennan's office seized hundreds of pounds of cocaine and marijuana from a tractor trailer parked in Hunts Point. (More bizarrely, one of the bigger busts of the fall came on September 11—in Battery Park City, no less, when a firefighter tipped off cops to an apartment that held nearly \$100,000 worth of

ecstasy.) And one longtime ecstasy dealer says he was shocked to be arrested by the DEA just weeks after September 11. "I thought they had better things to do," he harrumphs.

Still, drug users probably won't have to scrape their ATM cards for that last whiff of cocaine just yet. "No matter how much scrutiny we give to our borders, we can't seal them off," admits one U.S. Customs official. "Don't forget that this is a business for the traffickers—they'll always find a way to get their goods to the marketplace." **ETHAN BROWN**





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First Will and Testament

For young, striving New Yorkers, life revolves around how to get ahead (or, these days, how not to fall too far behind). What to *leave* behind—and to whom—doesn't usually factor into the equation. But now that mortality is on everyone's mind, even headlong thirty-somethings who once thought of themselves as immortal are wondering if they might need a will.

"The estate-planning practice has gone through the roof," says William L. Abrams, a partner at Abrams, Garfinkel & Rosen. "I've seen at

least three new clients a week, and they're almost exclusively under 35. A lot of young celebrity clients and investment bankers are asking, 'What happens if I die?'"

If you die without a will in New York state, your estate automatically goes to your spouse, then your children, then parents, siblings, and so on—an arrangement that's less than ideal for many Manhattanites. "I hate to take the line of New York as a collection of people who are alienated from their families," says Susan Mindell, a 38-year-old entertainment lawyer. "But if your family is not in

tune with your life, think about who's going to be in charge of not only your assets but your wishes—your legacy." Mindell and her partner had been sitting on drafts of their wills since last winter. "We weren't being reluctant, just lazy," she says. "Then 9/11 made us feel like we needed to make it happen."



Style AMY LARocca

A Little Italy

It's a banner week for New Yorkers with an Italian fetish, as two of Milan's biggest names are giving their New York flagships major face-lifts just in time to accommodate holiday shoppers. After two years of secrecy, delays, and rumors (including the one that the cash registers would be manned by robots), Prada's high-tech Rem Koolhaas-designed SoHo behemoth (pictured in an artist's rendering)—the first in a series of stores that the architect will create for Prada all over the world—will finally open on the corner of Broadway and Prince Street. Uptown, Bottega Veneta makes its official debut as a member of the Gucci group with the arrival of the first collection by designer Tomas Maier. It's the second recent overhaul for the venerable leather-goods house (the previous one brought us classic Bottega bags covered in graffiti), and one that suits the understated mood of the times: perfectly slouchy woven shoulder bags and crocodile messenger bags. The store itself has undergone a temporary renovation, and is scheduled to re-open with a new design next fall. Bottega's kickoff will be celebrated with a recession-style small



breakfast event, while Prada's opening gala, scheduled for Friday, should be so glamorous that—if you manage to sneak in—it'll make up for the fact that your company has canceled the Christmas party.

Tool Time

Anyone still paying off debts from the Fendi Baguette craze of a few seasons ago can breathe easy when it comes to this winter's chic-est bag. It's a Klein Tools bag, it comes from the hardware store, and its price is calibrated by inches, not ostrich feathers or sequins. Sixteen inches make for a roomy little handbag (\$49.99), while the 24-inch version would do well on weekend trips (\$64.99). The only trick is not to cede too much information when jealous admirers wonder if it's actually from Hermès. (Vague mentions of a waiting list always up the ante.) "Listen, tool bags have always been cool," says Andy Scheman, of Scheman & Grant Hardware on Eighth Avenue. "Particularly if you know how to break them in."

Though Tanya Jensen, an editor, and Tom Hawver, a designer, got married in 1998, they didn't deal with their estate until a few weeks ago. "We chose not to think about it in an alarmist way," says Jensen, 28, who was amused to discover that you can even set up "a little trust fund for the dachshund."

But not everyone is ready to sign on the line. If drafting a will means facing the inevitable (and gaining some semblance of control over it), it's also a nuisance. And some are more diligent about the task than others. "You know, I have no idea," said one pregnant 32-year-old, when asked whether she and her spouse have a will. "It's one of those things we should have, right?"

Then there are those for whom the decision is made by a gaping absence of assets. "Are you kidding? I don't even have renter's insurance," says a single 29-year-old writer. "Wait, my parents wouldn't inherit my credit-card debt, would they?"

"No one else can be held responsible for your debts," assures John M. Olivieri, a lawyer at Dewey Ballantine. "However, your estate is responsible if your assets exceed your debts. Before you give your couch to somebody, technically your creditors would have a right to sell it."

Not too concerned about the fate of her Ikea sofa, the writer lets out a sigh of relief: "If my mom got my credit-card bill, she would kill me." AMY GOLDWASSER



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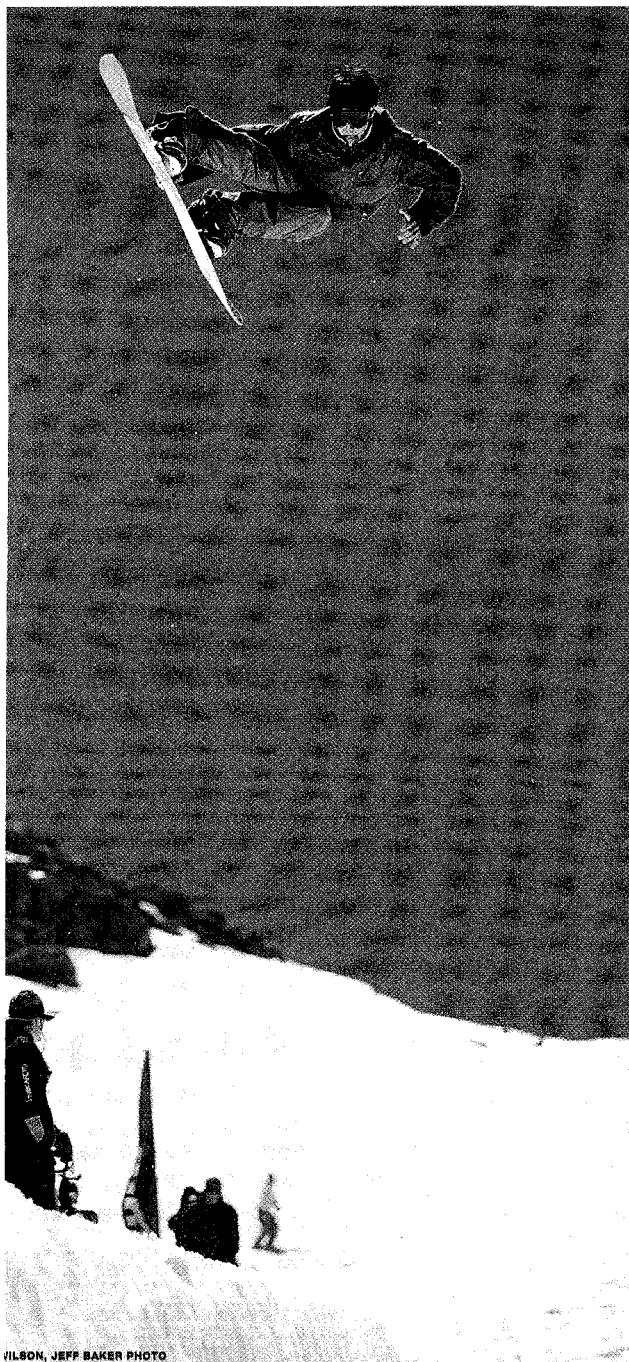
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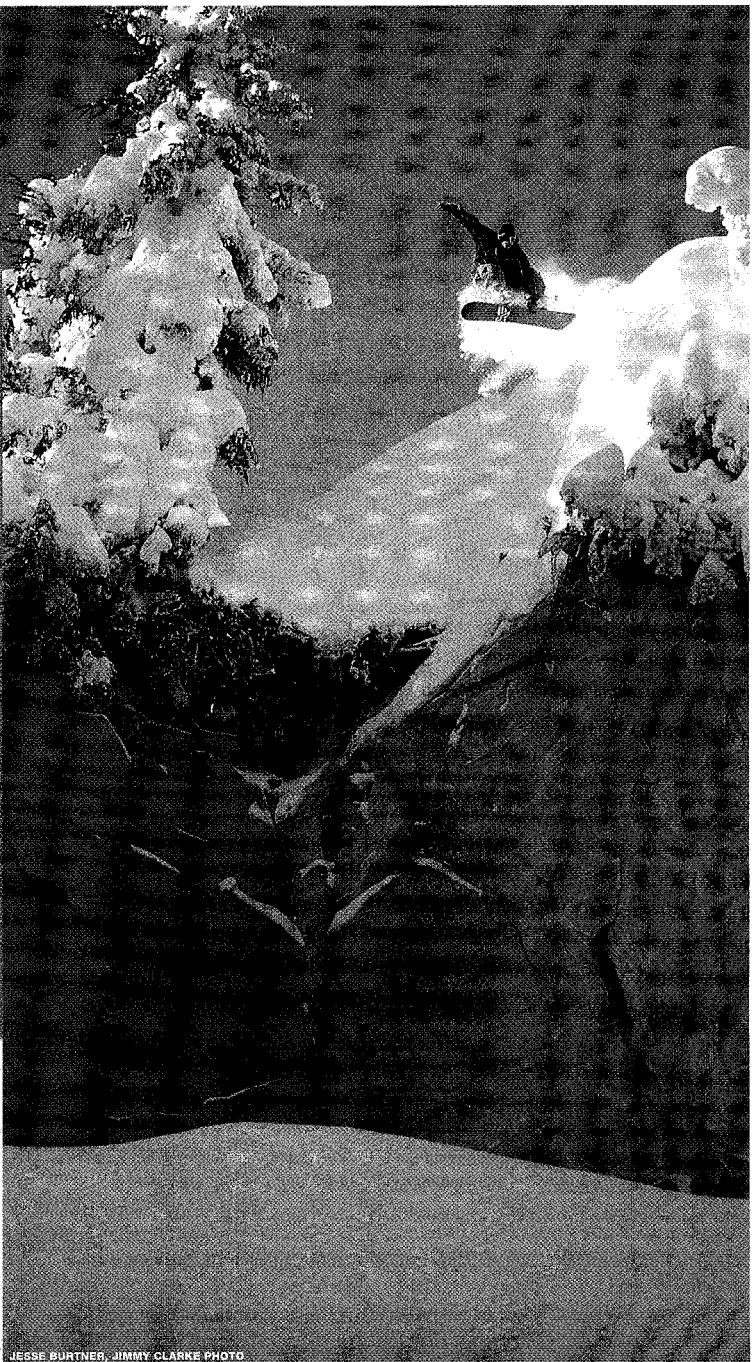
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The Good Soldier

For yielding to Hillary Clinton in the Senate race, Nita Lowey was rewarded with a key leadership role that's thrust her onto a national stage. She hasn't wasted the opportunity.

WHEN LAST WE ENCOUNTERED NITA LOWEY, at least in these pages, the Westchester congresswoman was abandoning her Senate dreams as she read the handwriting (H-I-L-L-A-R-Y) on the Democratic wall. It was a gracious, if inevitable, conclusion. One by-product of her decision to stay put was that Dick Gephardt importuned her to take the helm of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, which sounds like an honor and in some respects actually is—she's the first woman and, astonishingly, the first New Yorker in its 100-odd-year history to head the group—but mostly involves taking several hours out of already frantic work weeks to call contributors and beg.

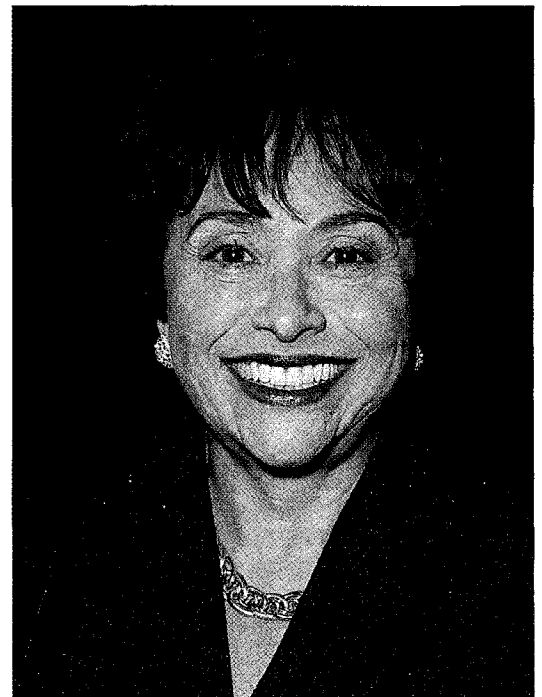
The job also entails willingly making of oneself a lightning rod for the other side, which Lowey, who has not been known as a partisan firebreather, recently managed with aplomb. In an editorial-board interview at *USA Today*, she sketched out the lineaments of Democratic strategy for the 2002 midterm elections, labeling the current downturn "George Bush's recession"—for reasons that strike me as antique in the post-Ken Starr era, those are considered fighting words in Washington—and calling the House Republicans' stimulus package "unpatriotic."

The Gannett people found this meaty enough to plop it on their front page. Deny Hastert and Ari Fleischer fired back in how-dare-she mode. Bob Novak chimed in, and so did Fox, where Fred Barnes and Morton Kondracke called her one of the week's losers (they report, you decide). In New York, of course, the fracas barely registered—the *Times* buried it, the *Post* took an editorial swipe but didn't give it news coverage, and the *News* ignored it altogether. I'd like to think this is because New York newspaper editors found her language unremarkable, but I know better. The papers haven't covered the congressional delegation, or New York's relation-

ship to Washington, for years now. It's one of several ways in which New York's political culture is, for all the racial Sturm und Drang, really quite undeveloped. If we all lived in Chicago, where civic life is far more robust (sorry, it's true), Lowey's remarks would have been front-page news in the *Tribune*.

It's a meaningful point, because here we have a genuinely significant national effort being led by New Yorkers, for the first time, really, in decades—since Roosevelt, or at least since Adam Clayton Powell chaired the committee that passed much of the Great Society legislation. They don't come much more New York than Lowey—born in the Bronx, moved to Queens (down the street from a family called the Cuomos), then to Westchester; charming in that way that New Yorkers universally consider endearing but that people elsewhere can find aggressive. And to run the DCCC she tapped Howard Wolfson, the well-regarded communications director from Hillary's campaign (and Yonkers native, and Yankees lunatic). The assignment: Win six seats. Take back the House.

History suggests it should happen. Excepting FDR's Democrats in 1934, no sitting president's party has picked up seats in a first midterm election since the Civil War; losses average a dozen seats. Ah, but the war, you say. Turns out that war, if anything, makes matters worse for the incumbent party—eleven months after Pearl Harbor, the Democrats lost 50 seats. Redistricting was supposed to benefit Republicans, but for a variety of reasons, it seems that redistricting, nationwide, is now a wash. So far, twelve Republicans are retiring from the House, and only six De-

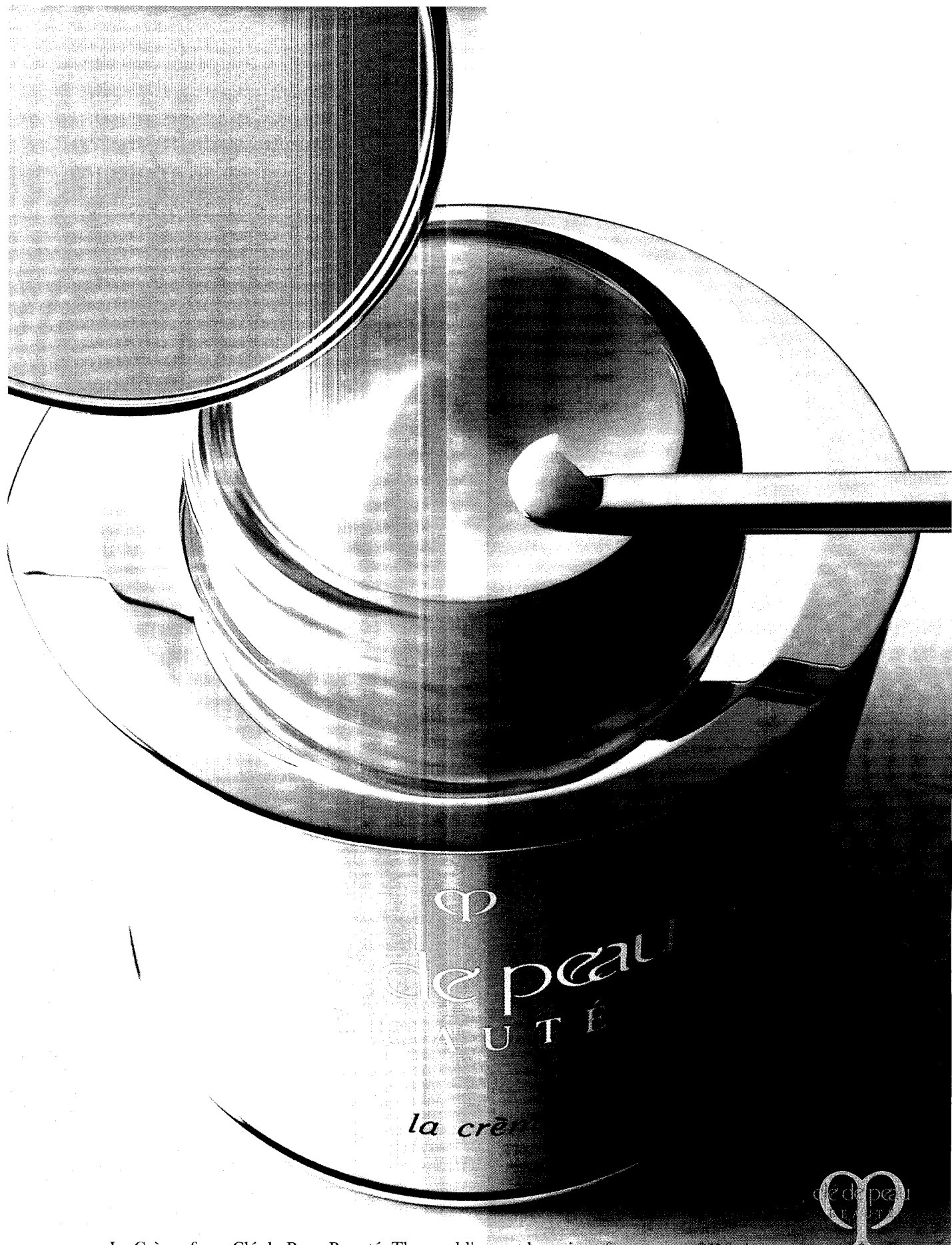


BULLY PULPIT: Democratic Party standard-bearer Nita Lowey in 1998.

mocrats. But you can't rely on history; you need an idea. Well, Nita Lowey, what is it?

"At a time of economic recession, a time when people are making sacrifices, it's wrong and inappropriate to give corporations a tax repeal retroactive to 1986," she says. This was, Lowey says, the heart of the House GOP stimulus package, under which corporations would receive an immediate refund of \$25 billion. And incidentally, which Texas-based energy company, whose chairman donated \$250,000 to the GOP in the last cycle, would get about \$250 million under the plan? If you said anything other than Enron, there's a ballpark in Houston whose naming rights I'd like to sell you.

THIS IS LOWEY'S IDEA. BUT YOU MIGHT AS well call it the Krugman Campaign. Few



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political columnists in my memory have so quickly and firmly established an identity for themselves as has Paul Krugman, the *Times* economic writer. Krugman has lacerated both the Bush tax cut and, more emphatically, the House stimulus bill; he has, almost single-handedly among the high pundits, kept up a substantive fusillade that has affected the national debate. And it now appears that his ideas are moving from commentary to strategy.

This week, Lowey's DCCC is rolling out ads in three congressional districts held by vulnerable Republican incumbents—in southern Illinois, southern Indiana, and West Virginia. The text is anti-stimulus-bill populist, and the timing is designed to prick the ears of working-class parents scrambling to buy Harry Potter toys.

Lowey's success will depend on two factors. First, the Democratic effort will have to get voters to focus on the economy and not the war. "In the handling of the war," Lowey insists, "there is no difference between the parties" (the Democrats hope they can inoculate themselves against charges of dovism). Second, the economy will have to stay flat.

About either of those, who knows how things will go? But war or no war, there's no reason that Democrats shouldn't be able to attack Republicans' domestic policies. "I think what she's doing is not only appropriate but required," says Barney Frank. "Nonpartisanship and partisanship are equally important aspects of democracy. What we 'partisan bicker' about are some of the most important questions a society can debate." Lowey was probably wrong, if only tactically, to sling the U-word. Tom DeLay threw it back at the Democrats last week, and an argument on those terms is good for the GOP. Democrats can't persuade voters that Republicans are unpatriotic, but they can persuade them that they're greedy.

Lowey has always been popular. "With the possible exception of that Koch ad," says consultant Philip Friedman, "no ad in the Hillary campaign was more significant than the ad Lowey made, especially in shifting the votes of women in suburban counties."

If she can pull this off, she'll be more than popular. "It was smart of her to bring in Wolfson," says Hank Sheinkopf, "and if they do this, it brings back to New York the clout the state desperately needs and hasn't had in years." Charlie Rangel will chair Ways and Means, and Lowey herself will head an appropriations subcommittee (more important than most full committees). Who needs a Senate seat? ■

E-mail: tomasky@aol.com



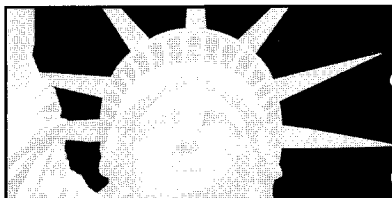
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O'NEILL VER

NEW YORK STORY
John O'Neill with
girlfriend Valerie
James, June 2001.
Inset: a memorial for
O'Neill at Elaine's.

SUS OSAMA

Most of the victims of the September 11 attack seemed tragically random—they were just going to work. Not John O'Neill. Until last August, he'd been the FBI's top expert on Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, a lead investigator of the USS *Cole* and African embassy bombings. Leaving the Bureau in frustration, he'd taken a job he thought of as retirement: World Trade Center security chief. But when he died it became clear: His own life contained as many mysteries as his enemy's. **By Robert Kolker**

"MONDAY NIGHT, WE'RE GOING OUT, AND I'LL SHOW YOU what you've been missing," ex-FBI agent John P. O'Neill told his friend Jerry Hauer. On O'Neill's overloaded social calendar, Mondays were reserved for

Elaine's, where he was a charter member of the famously clubby crime-fighting crowd that included such legends as Bill Bratton and the late Jack Maple. His street cred carried a lot of weight, even with that group: For most of the past decade, O'Neill had been the FBI's foremost expert on Osama bin Laden. He'd been the public face of the New York field office since 1997, leading the investigation into the African embassy bombings and last year's USS *Cole* attack in Yemen. But his bluff, aggressive style had apparently alienated some of his superiors, and his career had stalled.

Jerry Hauer, the city's first terrorism czar under Rudy Giuliani, had just helped guide O'Neill to a soft landing in the private sector—chief of security for the World



PHOTOGRAPH BY JEROME JAMES. INSET, PHOTOGRAPH BY JESSICA BURSTEIN.

Trade Center. The job, which could reach \$300,000 with bonus, had cushioned the blow considerably. So for O'Neill, Monday, September 10, was a night to celebrate.

A typical night out with O'Neill had three or four stages. This one started with drinks at Windows on the World with his friend Robert Tucker, a former Queens assistant D.A., talking about whom he might hire at the World Trade Center. They moved on to a front table at Elaine's, where, as usual, he was noticed. "I knew he had left the FBI, so I grabbed him and said, 'John, are you okay?'" says Wallace Millard, a cop turned security expert who spotted him from a neighboring table. "He said, 'Wally, I'm the best. I've got a job that pays me three times what I got.'"

Hauer joined the party at 9:30, and they chatted about what they knew—ter-



SECRET AGENT
O'Neill with
girlfriend Valerie
James, June 2001.

WHEN THE PLANES HIT, "I'M SURE HE KNEW WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE," SAYS A FRIEND. "I KNOW THAT HE MUST HAVE BEEN MAD AS HELL. HE MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING, 'HOW COULD WE HAVE ALLOWED THIS TO HAPPEN?' "



TABLE HOPPER O'Neill and Elaine Kaufman, June 2001.

rorism, security, the '93 attack on the Trade towers, the years when Hauer and O'Neill had worked closely together on bio-terror-defense strategies, the likelihood of another assault on the city. Weeks earlier, O'Neill had told one friend, "They'll never stop trying to take down those two buildings."

And as he led the charge out of Elaine's to Stage 3 at the China Club, his friends remember John O'Neill looking over and saying, "At least on my watch, I can say that there was never a terrorist attack in New York City."

"WE WERE LAUGHING that morning," remembers Valerie James, his girlfriend of eleven years. For once, John was in his own eleven-year-old Buick LeSabre, not a Bureau car, so he was permitted to drop her off at her job as sales director for the fashion line Sunny Choi.

He'd made it home from China Club at 2:30—typical—but he was up now, and happy, and ready to take her to an 8:15 meeting she had for Fashion Week before heading to his office on the thirty-fourth floor of the north tower. "He was in a really good mood that day," James says.

James heard about the attack on the radio; it wasn't until 9:17 that a call finally came from John.

"There are body parts everywhere," he shouted. "Do you know what hit it?"

James said the radio said it was a 747.

"I'll call you in a little bit," he said.

O'Neill also spoke to his 29-year-old son, J.P., who had taken the train in to visit his father at his new job but had made it only as far as Saint Vincent's Hospital. "As soon as you make it down here," he told him, "call me and I'll come and get you."

One FBI agent remembers talking with O'Neill in the lobby of Tower One, helping the Bureau and the Fire Department set up a command center. O'Neill asked him if they really got the Pentagon. He was last seen walking in the general direction of

Tower Two minutes before it collapsed. His body was found a week later; it isn't clear where exactly he died. But what's not in question, at least among those who knew him, is that even before the second plane hit, O'Neill must have understood who had done it.

"I'm sure he knew who was responsible," says Teddy Leb, a friend and fan of O'Neill's who heads a foundation for law-enforcement officers. "I know that he must have been mad as hell. He must have been thinking, *How in the world could we have allowed this to happen?*"

IN DEATH, JOHN O'NEILL HAS BECOME SOMETHING bigger than he was in life—a human embodiment of unheeded warnings. Here was a man who had studied and understood bin Laden, the cycles of his attacks, the escalation of the deaths, but whose arguments weren't followed up by government action. This had much to do with bureaucratic inertia, but it also, undoubtedly, had something to do with O'Neill—his aggressiveness, his charisma, the fact that he didn't fit the mold of the standard-issue FBI agent.

For him, the real job started after five; his friends were his contacts, his contacts his friends. He was the only agent who could be found smoking Dominican cigars with De Niro on Tommy Mottola's yacht one night and introducing Scotland Yard spooks to the China Club's VIP level the next. He'd invariably be dressed in dark-



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blue pin-striped Burberry suits with white shirts and ties, his jet-black hair slicked back, his feet in size 9½ Bruno Magli shoes, his ear to his cell phone, his hands fiddling with a BlackBerry with intelligence contacts organized by country—Saudi Arabia, Yemen, England, Spain, France—many of whom he'd escort to Elaine's when they came to town.

Those friends brought him intelligence that no one else in the Bureau could nail down. "You could see that come home to roost in the investigations," says U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White, whose summary arguments in the embassy-bombings

He worked part-time at FBI headquarters while at a community college in Virginia, then at American University, then at George Washington University, where he went for a forensic-science master's, all while working as a fingerprinting clerk and tour guide.

He joined the Bureau in the seventies, tracking governmental fraud, white-collar crime, and organized crime in Baltimore and as the field-office chief in Chicago. In 1995, he was reborn again when the Bureau brought him back to Washington as the section chief for counterterrorism. It was there that he became an expert in Islamic-fundamentalist

extremism. And when he came to New York in 1997, it was the realization of plans he and James had made years earlier in Chicago. O'Neill, ever the striver, wasted no time recasting himself as a New York operator, buddying up with people like Jerry Hauer and Howard Safir, local law-enforcement leaders who weren't natural allies with the FBI until O'Neill came along.

Last year, ABC reporter John Miller, the Joey Bishop of the crime-fighting Rat Pack, was sitting

alone in a Middle East cantina when he heard O'Neill's swaggering voice boom from behind him, "So is this the Elaine's of Yemen?"

Of course, not every late-night phone call was Bureau business. He had a wife in Linwood, New Jersey, Christine O'Neill, whom he'd married in 1971, though the two had been living apart since he moved to Chicago in 1991. There was the girlfriend, Valerie James, he'd lived with in Chicago and now here, and the children from both relationships who all looked to him as a father. The liaisons didn't stop there. "He was living with Valerie, he had another girlfriend in Washington, and he was dating someone else here in New York," says one close friend. "Before his death, they didn't know about each other."

Among his New York friends, some jaws dropped in astonishment that the widow at O'Neill's New Jersey funeral was not Valerie James. (Christine O'Neill would not comment for this story.) "There are people here who knew him for six years

but never knew he had a wife and kids in Atlantic City," James tells me. "I was talking with my friend about it, and he said, 'Let's not forget, John *was* a spy.' I mean, in the FBI he reinvented himself into this other person—which is why I think he compartmentalized his life."

James says that O'Neill kept other secrets: the overwhelming debts he'd racked up living a James Bond life on a Bureau salary; a plan, complete with legal papers, to divorce his wife. But is her John O'Neill the real one? Given what James has learned about him since his death, she isn't quite sure.

"I honestly believe the main mistress in John's life was the Bureau," says Pat D'Amuro, a longtime deputy in New York. "There are times when we talked, and he wondered if that was the right decision."

AS EARLY AS 1995, LONG BEFORE the embassy bombings and the Cole attack made Osama bin Laden a household name, O'Neill made the case up the FBI food chain and in Congress that the nation's greatest threat came from the Islamic-fundamentalist groups that were emerging from the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. "John had this scenario that's going on now figured out eight years ago," says an old FBI colleague, John Blaha. "That this is the way it is, and this is the way it's gonna have to be resolved."

In the 20-20 hindsight of September 11, O'Neill's confidential briefings in the mid-nineties "were right on, in terms of these kinds of people and what they could potentially do to us," says Robert Blitzer, a former deputy of O'Neill's. "Just the scope of their infrastructure in the U.S.—and inherent to that is the fact that they could go operational at any time."

Unlike his colleagues, he went public with his opinions. In 1996, he told a conference of private-security managers about new groups that had beaten the Soviets in Afghanistan and who "can assemble quickly and can quickly disperse and are extraordinarily hard to track." The following year, he called the Islamic-fundamentalist victory in Afghanistan a watershed moment: "They beat one of the largest standing armies in the world at that time, which gave them a buoyed sense of success—that they could take on other countries like the U.S." O'Neill's deafening clarity, however, often translated better outside the office than in the FBI. He wanted to command, direct, control, and manage everything he was responsible for, and inevitably he pissed off many of the wrong people.

"There was occasionally controversy



BROTHERS IN ARMS From left, former FBI New York bureau head James Kallstrom, NYPD organized-crime officer Martin O'Boyle, friend Ted Leb, and O'Neill at the Plaza Hotel three days before he died.

case against bin Laden and others are packed with evidence that O'Neill unearthed. "John went at it comprehensively, yielding things from people in London or people in Yemen we never otherwise would have gotten."

His expertise on bin Laden was unquestioned. He took that expertise personally, and had no trouble correcting anyone, above or below him. "He was the paramount, most knowledgeable agent we had in the FBI, probably in the government, with respect to counterintelligence matters," says Louis Freeh.

"The answer would often be 'Check with John O'Neill,'" says Janet Reno. "When I walked into the room and saw John O'Neill there, I was always pleased, because I always knew I would get a reasoned analysis. He had a powerful command."

It was a life he'd chosen. As a kid, growing up in a fourth-floor walk-up in Atlantic City, O'Neill fixed in on Efrem Zimbalist Jr. in *The F.B.I.*

that swirled around John," says Barry Mawn, his superior in New York. "I mean, John for the most part didn't suffer fools. And either by his direct words or maybe expressions, I think he made some people feel uncomfortable, like he was challenging them."

"He had elbows—he'd press his point very hard," says Mary Jo White. "Others might have been more diplomatic—but less effective when it matters."

ON JULY 4, 1998, JERRY HAUER was riding in his car up First Avenue near 20th Street, not far from O'Neill's apartment in Peter Cooper Village, when he spotted his friend walking down the street in short pants. Hauer told his driver to slow down; he thought he'd give John some grief about showing off his knees. "How's it going?" Hauer said.

O'Neill wasn't in the mood. He leaned into the car window. "My friend's causing trouble again," he said.

"Who?"

"OBL," O'Neill said softly. "This guy's a problem."

One month later, simultaneous bombs near the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, killed 224 people. As soon as the bombings took place, O'Neill was on the phone with colleagues, calling bin Laden the prime suspect. "John was really the first to say that maybe Al Qaeda was responsible for that," confirms the New York field-office director at the time, Lew Schiliro. "The coordination it took to hit both embassies four minutes apart, the idea of a cell operating in Kenya, their ability to strike at relatively unprotected embassies, the nature of the explosives that they used—pretty much at the outset he had a strong belief that they were behind it."

And when it came time for Mary Jo White to expand her World Trade Center indictments to include the embassy-bombing suspects, Schiliro says, O'Neill was there to connect the dots. "The evolution from the World Trade Center to Ramzi Yousef, who was arrested in Pakistan, and the plot in the Pacific to plant explosives in twelve U.S. airliners—and his connecting to bin Laden. When the bombings happened, John was a student of this, and he brought a lot of information to bear on it."

Last year, when Schiliro left the New York field office to be replaced by Barry Mawn, O'Neill was furious about being passed over. In his mind, he clearly outclassed most of his counterparts in Washington. He would travel with Louis Freeh to Saudi Arabia; they'd stay home. He'd be in Yemen within hours of the *Cole* bomb-

ing; they'd work the phones. Inside the Bureau, his impact never registered the way it had with others.

IN THIS WILDLY ALTERED POLITICAL LANDSCAPE, all sides are trying to lay claim to John O'Neill's legacy; he's a Rorschach test. If you lean toward the right, like some of his New York friends, you believe O'Neill quit in a fury when the diplomats neutered him. David Cornstein, who ran Finlay jewelers and now is chairman of the New York Olympic Games commission, used to tailgate with O'Neill at Giants and Jets games. "We concurred," he says, "that the country after the Cold War had really fallen a bit asleep, and there was a liberal movement



SON AND HUSBAND O'Neill's mother and wife Christine at his funeral service in Atlantic City, September 28.

toward more and more civil rights, and the country wasn't observant enough to realize that the world had changed and our view of the way security should be should change, too."

But if you lean to the left, like the French authors Guillaume Dasquié and Jean-Charles Brisard, who feature a July interview with O'Neill in their new book, *Ben Laden, La Vérité Interdite*, you've outed O'Neill as a sort of smoking gun—a man who they say all but confirmed in his final months that George W. Bush's oil-industry-bred administration was so worried about alienating Saudi Arabia that it decided to negotiate with the Taliban rather than go after it. Before September 11, they

argue, the United States' primary goal was to build a pipeline in Central Asia—tapping oilfields in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, through Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Indian Ocean.

In July, over drinks at Elaine's, O'Neill began to open up to Brisard about his frustrations, which, it turned out, stretched back to the 1996 investigation of the Riyadh army-base bombing. O'Neill made several trips to Saudi Arabia, one with Freeh, but witnesses were executed before the FBI could question them. (Brisard was also impressed by O'Neill's social clout. Elaine Kaufman herself and James Woods came by and said hello. "I had the feeling he knew everyone in the city," he says.)

O'Neill complained about the inability of U.S. diplomacy to obtain anything from King Fahd. He told the Frenchman that "every answer, every key to dismantling the Osama bin Laden organizations are in Saudi Arabia."

He ran into another diplomatic barrier last year in Yemen, after the *Cole* bombing. Within days of arriving, he'd knocked heads with the ambassador, Barbara Bodine. While the FBI was interrogating witnesses, the State Department was trying to coax Yemeni diplomats into pledging not to support terror. The conflicting agendas, combined with O'Neill's determination, were explosive. He wanted his agents to carry automatic weapons, like their Yemeni counterparts; she insisted they carry smaller arms, like diplomats. By the time Barry Mawn arrived, Bodine was calling O'Neill an outright liar. O'Neill's comments about the ambassador, friends say, weren't printable.

"He always had a singular focus on the people he sent into harm's way," says Freeh, who wouldn't comment directly about Bodine. "I'm sure he ruffled a couple of feathers doing that. In Yemen, he would call me literally in the middle of the night and say, 'Boss, I'm not comfortable with our situation here.'"

When O'Neill came back for Thanksgiving, James was shocked to see him exhausted and twenty pounds lighter. He never returned: Bodine told Freeh that O'Neill wasn't allowed to. One more irony came after September 11. The FBI returned after Bodine left her job, and according to Mawn, Yemeni authorities were so moved by O'Neill's death that they began cooperating with the investigation again.

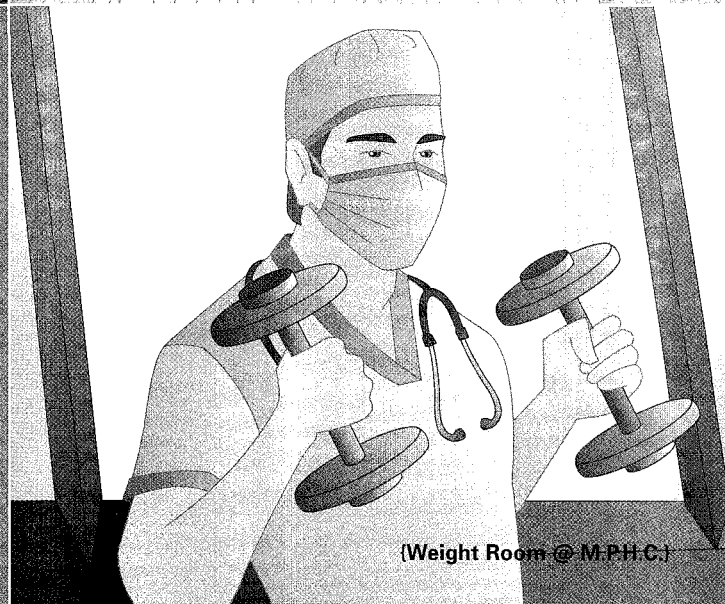
THE SCUFFLE WITH THE AMBASSADOR MADE the papers. And before long, O'Neill's press coverage got worse. On August 19, the *Times* printed that he was under investigation. A year earlier, (continued on page 79)



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HOLIDAY FILM PREVIEW OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, THE USUAL CRUSH OF OSCAR-WORTHY FILMS WILL JAM CITY SCREENS. BUT THIS YEAR, A SURPRISING NUMBER ARE THE WORK OF NEW YORK-BASED FILMMAKERS—INCLUDING SOME LOCAL HEROES YOU DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WERE HERE.

NEW YORK GOES TO THE MOVIES

HE'S LIVED AND WORKED IN
NEW YORK FOR ALMOST
TWO DECADES, BUT
RON HOWARD STILL
DOESN'T GET THE EAST-
COAST CRED HE DESERVES.
NOW, WITH THE RELEASE OF
A BEAUTIFUL MIND,
ATTENTION MUST BE PAID.

THE INVISIBLE MAN

BY MARK HOROWITZ

FOR SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN famous for so long—he became a TV star at 6 and remains eerily boyish at 47—Ron Howard still manages to stay surprisingly anonymous, even when he's strolling through Grand Central Terminal at rush hour. He's just another casually dressed baby-boomer commuting to work in sneakers, blue corduroys, and an NBC baseball cap. One would never guess that Howard is one of the most successful filmmakers in the world—only a handful of other producer-directors, like Steven Spielberg and Robert Zemeckis, can even give him a run for his money. Few of the New Yorkers in Grand Central this morning—even if they happen to work in the film business—realize that he's been living and making his films right here since 1985. He used to commute in from a house in Greenwich, Connecticut, often on Metro-North, but now he and his wife divide their time between a home in Westchester and a place in the city. "My kids are older, and we finally bought an apartment," he says, "so I'm out and about a little bit more."

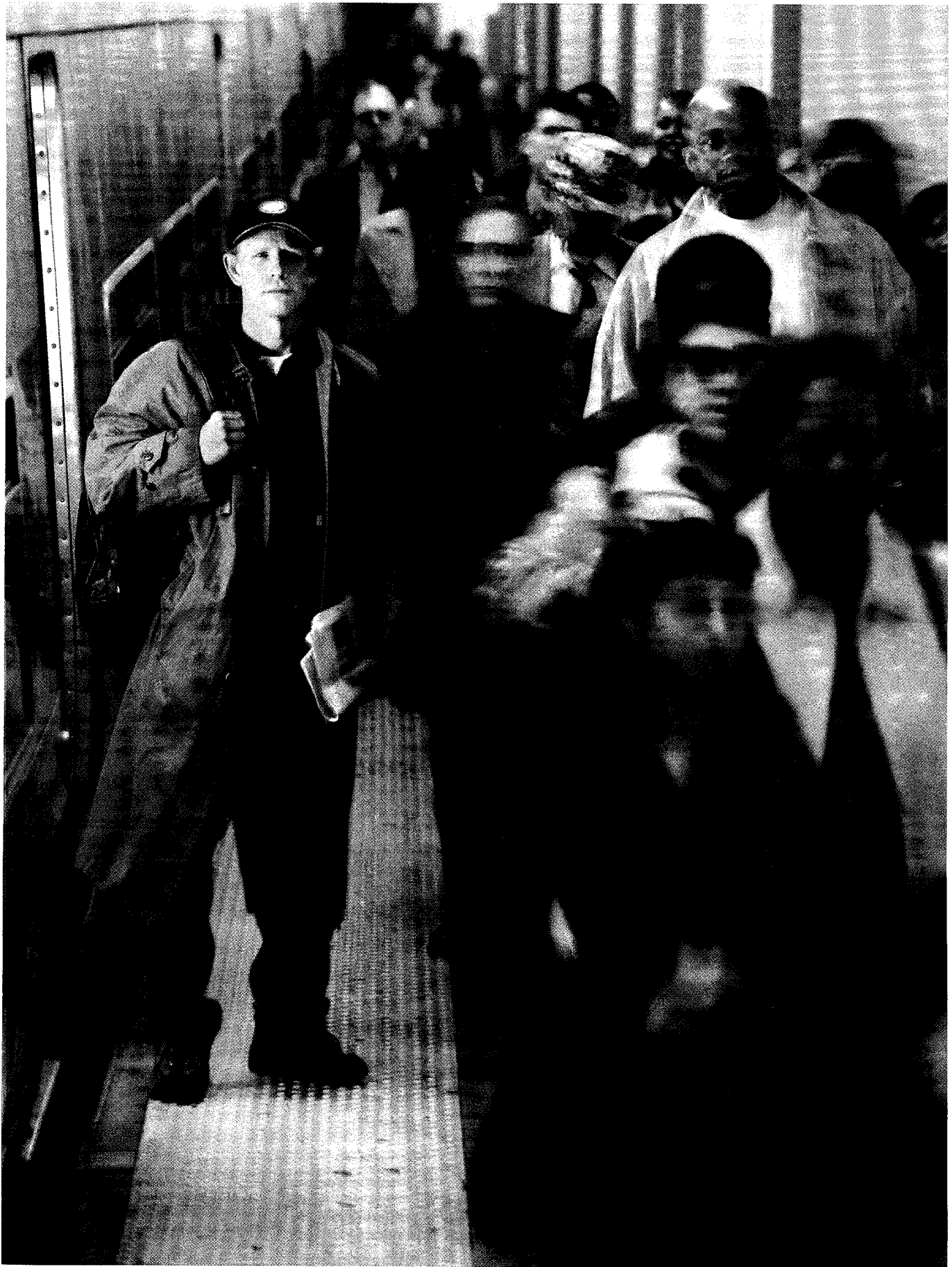
He may be out and about more, but the media types who spotted him lunching at Michael's last month still assumed Howard was just visiting from the coast. Possibly it's just too hard to think of Howard as a New York auteur. After all, his reputation rests on being the quintessential Hollywood director: a genial craftsman with great commercial instincts and a flexible, almost invisible style. He prides himself on his ability to switch from light comedies like *Splash* to thrillers like *Ransom* and intense dramas like *Apollo 13*, and to succeed at all three. *Real* New York directors—guys like Spike Lee and Martin

Scorsese—are supposed to make deeply personal, critically acclaimed flops, with the odd, unexpected hit only now and then. They're supposed to be edgy realists, not self-effacing jacks-of-all-trades whose last project was the Christmas confection *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, a film that earned Howard the worst reviews of his career and his biggest box-office success. No wonder that after sixteen years, people are still surprised to see him in the Grand Concourse.

"Hey, man, you're Ron Howard, right?" A man extends his hand and Howard smiles and shakes it. "Thanks for *Born on the Fourth of July*," the guy enthuses, blithely unaware that Oliver Stone directed it. "Great film."

Howard laughs it off as he walks away. "Rob Reiner always complains that he gets thanked for *Parenthood*," he says, "and I always tell him that I get credited with *Stand by Me*."

But Howard doesn't need to prove his New York filmmaking credentials. He preps all his films here, and he does all editing and post-production here. When possible, he likes to shoot here as well. His two early breakthrough comedies, *Night Shift* and *Splash*, were both set in the city, as were *The Paper* and *Ransom*. He also holds up the New York end of Imagine Entertainment, which produces all of Howard's films, plus blockbusters like *The Nutty Professor* and *Liar Liar*. His partner in Imagine is the L.A.-based producer Brian Grazer. They seem like polar opposites, but the two have been friends and allies for almost twenty years. The price of co-running a huge movie company from New York is that Howard spends a ridiculous amount of time talking to Grazer and others on the



"IN MY DAY-TO-DAY LIVING, I'M NOT ENCOUNTERING PEOPLE IN THE BUSINESS, AND THERE'S SOMETHING VERY LIBERATING ABOUT THAT," SAYS HOWARD. "WHEN YOU'RE IN L.A., IT'S THE BE-ALL AND END-ALL."

phone, usually listening in on marathon conference calls that often last for hours. To pass the time he makes ornate large-scale doodles, like stained-glass windows, first sketching in black ink then painstakingly filling them in with sets of colored pencils that an assistant always keeps handy. ("That's my left brain," he says, a touch embarrassed. "They're a little weird.")

Yet like Spielberg before *Schindler's List*, Howard still hasn't gotten the critical respect he deserves. After the success of *Apollo 13* in 1995, there was a sense that he had reached a new level of maturity as a director, but the follow-ups—the disappointing *EDtv* and the bloated *Grinch*—did nothing to further his cause.

"For a long time," he says, "I was trying to display unexpected range. That was much more of an issue. But in the last four or five years, I kind of worked in all the genres I expect I ever will work in. There was a certain turning point."

Next week, he releases his 16th film, *A Beautiful Mind*, and it's not the Ron Howard film anyone's been expecting. *A Beautiful Mind* stars Russell Crowe as John Forbes Nash Jr., the real-life Princeton mathematician who fought a decades-long battle with schizophrenia before winning the Nobel Prize in 1994. Crowe is the volatile center of the film, and his mesmerizing performance is certain to earn him another Oscar nomination.

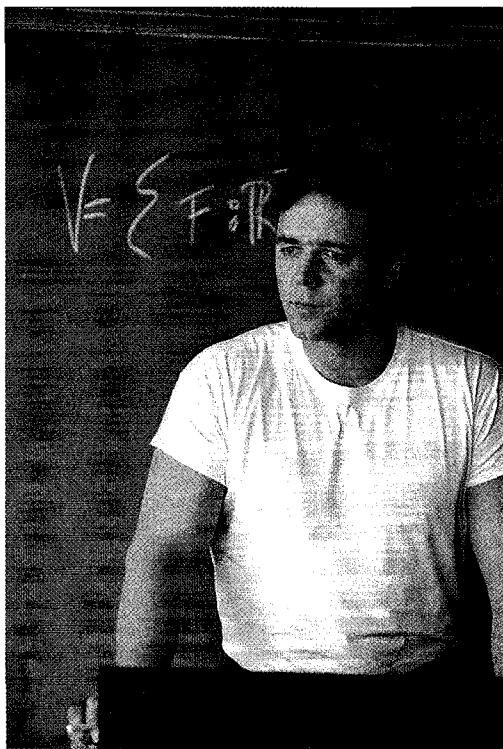
But Crowe has given Oscar-worthy performances before. It's Howard who is breaking new ground here with a film that's dark and difficult and doesn't fit into any conventional genre; and though it manages to deliver plenty of crowd-pleasing moments, it does not sugarcoat the ugliness of Nash's mental illness. For a director who is proud of his "invisible" style, *A Beautiful Mind* also has several bold visual and narrative surprises. Much in the film is not what it at first seems—suffice it to say that the trailers and TV commercials are being a bit coy, even intentionally misleading, about the film's content.

"There's no question it's the most chal-

lenging thing I've done," Howard says.

Early handicapping within the industry already puts him in the front-running for an Oscar nomination. He's never been nominated before. If he wins, then no one will ever be able to say he's not a New York director. Shot all over the city and in New Jersey, *A Beautiful Mind* is challenging, disturbing, claustrophobic, and original. What more can the guy do?

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THANKSGIVING, HOWARD is overseeing a team of ten sound and picture editors as they put the finishing touches on the film. They're all on the eighth floor of Sound One, the editing and post-production facility on West 54th Street where Howard completes most of his films. In the large mixing studio, they adjust the music and effects tracks for a



▲ *A BEAUTIFUL MIND*: Directed by Ron Howard; starring Russell Crowe (above), Jennifer Connelly, Ed Harris; opens December 25 (Universal).

crucial scene where Nash's long-suffering wife, played by Jennifer Connelly, discovers that her husband has not been taking his medications. It's a turning point in the narrative, and in recent test screenings, Howard sensed that "the moment didn't

quite have the intensity that it had earlier," so he's tweaking the music cues and the sound effects, making everything a bit louder.

But in a subsequent scene, the music was swelling *too* loudly—so they dial it down a bit. "It was a little too much," Howard explains. "It felt too manipulative, tugging a little too hard. In some films that could be exactly what you want, but in this film"—he hesitates, as if aware that he's comparing this to his own previous films—"it's so well acted and the story carries itself."

Over the years, Howard has had several projects about mental illness in development, drawn to the difficult challenge of portraying a chaotic interior state in a medium that focuses entirely on exteriors. That interest led him to the script for *A Beautiful Mind*, which Brian Grazer had already been developing with screenwriter Akiva Goldsman (*A Time to Kill*, *Practical Magic*). "This is one of the few movies I've ever done where there really is a single, central character. Usually it's more of an ensemble. But in this case he's both the protagonist and the antagonist—or at least his mind is—which is why it's such a great title."

HOWARD IS SUCH A PLEASANT, UNASSUMING guy, it's hard to believe he's one of Hollywood's four or five most powerful directors. But living on the East Coast has given him a partial antidote to Hollywood vanity. "Of course I'm vain," he insists, "but in my day-to-day living in the East, I'm not encountering people in the business unless I specifically come to work. And I think there's something very liberating about that, being constantly reminded that even if what you're doing is important to you, it's not the be-all and end-all. When you're in L.A., it's the be-all and end-all."

Modesty makes for good collaborations. It may explain the long partnerships Howard has maintained with Grazer, whom he's worked with since 1981, and with his wife, Cheryl, whom he's been married to for 26 years. Howard's self-effacing style, his openness, and the calm confidence that comes from years of success allow him to create an environment where others—actors, writers, editors, cameramen—don't feel overpowered by someone else's vision. That, in part, is

what attracts an actor like Russell Crowe to the project.

"A couple of things surprised me about Russell," Howard says, watching as another of the actor's big scenes is cued up. "He had read the book and the script and was very well prepared for our first meeting. I felt that his bullshit detector was going to be valuable. Hanks has a great bullshit detector, and it was very valuable on *Apollo 13*, and I felt a similar kind of thing with Russell. He's charismatic, but he also displays intellect and physical presence and vulnerability all in the same package. What really surprised me, though, was the physical transformation that he makes, a complete physical embodiment that has little to do with Russell."

Howard watches as the editing team plays and replays one shot where Crowe shuffles up some steps on the Princeton campus, clutching a briefcase and an umbrella, looking nervous but resolute. "He had an ongoing dialogue with the property master," Howard says. "Everything was important, the newspaper, everything. Each prop in that shot is something that took him a half-hour to work on."

Crowe didn't meet the real John Nash before shooting began, but Howard did. Nash is 73, and he still works at Princeton. "I spent a great day with him in his office," Howard says, "and I videotaped it for Russell. Nash gave me a sort of lecture, kind of explaining his work, which I never could quite get, beyond the broad strokes. But it was great to see this man in his seventies kneeling down on one knee to get at the last corner of the chalkboard because he'd filled it all up. He's not particularly fond of simplifying his ideas so they're more digestible, but he was very polite and hung in there for a couple of hours."

It's easy to see why an actor would want to take on the role of a lonely schizophrenic genius who battles himself and the world to establish the value of his mathematical theories. But what was it about the story of a misfit like Nash that attracted a well-adjusted man like Howard to want to spend eighteen months of his life bringing it to the screen?

He thinks about that for a second. "I'm a little bit isolated and a little bit quiet," he says. "I keep to myself, so I connected to that. And though I'm not a genius, unfortunately, I'm ambitious and I think I can do better. Nash believed there was something that he needed to prove." Howard, apparently, does, too.

THE BEST OF THE REST

AS WE HEAD DOWN TO THE WIRE IN WHAT MAY BE ONE OF THE FIERCEST OSCAR DERBIES IN YEARS, A SCORECARD TO THE REMAINING CONTENDERS (AND ALSO-RANS)



▲ IRIS

Directed by Richard Eyre

Starring Judi Dench, Jim Broadbent, and Kate Winslet

Opens December 14 (Miramax)

Dame Judi Dench is already a front-runner in the Best Actress Oscar sweepstakes for her performance as British novelist Iris Murdoch, who succumbed to Alzheimer's disease in 1999. Kate Winslet (pictured) plays Iris as a younger woman, and Jim Broadbent is heartbreaking in the role of Oxford literary critic John Bayley, Iris's doting and devoted husband. What could have been a treacly disease-of-the-week TV movie may turn out to be the love story of the year.



▲ THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS

Directed by Wes Anderson

Starring Gene Hackman, Gwyneth Paltrow, Angelica Huston, Ben Stiller, and Bill Murray

Opens December 14 (Disney)

Wes Anderson's curse is that he's the critics' darling, so when *The Royal Tenenbaums*, his portrait of an eccentric New York family, premiered at the New York Film Festival this October, it was so smothered in advance hype

and inflated expectations that some disappointment was almost inevitable. With expectations suitably lowered now, the film should be received much better in its main release, and there may even be a Best Screenplay Oscar nomination waiting in the wings.



▲ VANILLA SKY

Directed by Cameron Crowe

Starring Tom Cruise, Penélope Cruz, and Cameron Diaz

Opens December 14 (Paramount)

Paramount has kept this remake of a surrealistic 1997 Spanish thriller à trois (it also starred Penélope Cruz) under tight wraps (we do know it's set in New York now), but we're less nervous about the onscreen chemistry between Cruise and Cruz than we are about the Cruise-Cameron Crowe combustion. If these two can't rebottle some of their original *Jerry Maguire* electricity, the *Sky* may fall.



▲ PINERO

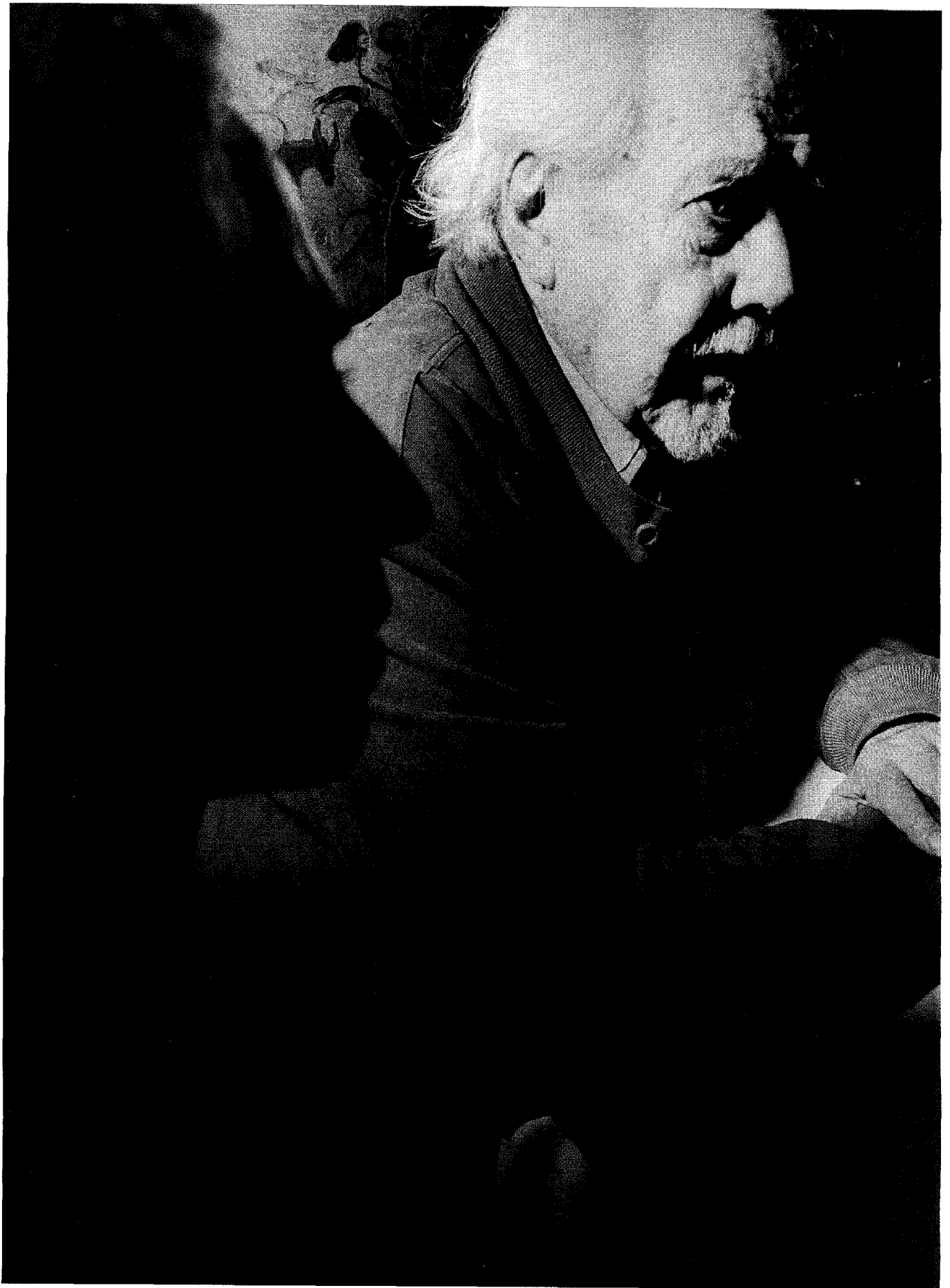
Directed by Leon Ichaso

Starring Benjamin Bratt, Talisa Soto, Mandy Patinkin, and Rita Moreno

Opens December 14 (Miramax)

Heroin addiction and prison rape are hardly standard Christmas fare, but this gritty bio-

(continued on page 43)



THE BUZZ IS GOOD, THE CAST IS STELLAR, AND THE LEGENDARY DIRECTOR OF NASHVILLE AND THE PLAYER IS BACK IN BUSINESS WITH A NEW FILM, GOSFORD PARK. DARE ROBERT ALTMAN CONTEMPLATE A HIT?

"BE STILL MY HEART," HE MURMURS.

A SEAT AT BOB'S TABLE

BY GEORGE KALOGERAKIS

"I'M PREPARED TO SING FOR MY supper," declares Robert Altman, sitting down at one of the two tables he favors at Elaine's, back by the kitchen entrance. (The other is up front, near the bar.) Kathryn Altman, his stylish wife of 42 years, is with him. A few showbiz friends are expected later on, after they've attended a screening of the director's new film, *Gosford Park*.

At 76, he is tall, blue-eyed, white-haired, goateed—casual in a brown suede jacket and blue oxford shirt. He looks well but says he's under the weather: "I got a flu shot two days ago, and it worked—I got the flu." He asks for water and a glass of Chianti.

"Bob, Elaine's really gone all out for you tonight," says Kathryn, handing a basket around. "She's toasted the bread."

One of America's greatest and most prolific directors, Altman is known for his fiercely independent relationship to Hollywood: He's been a New Yorker for nearly three decades and recently returned to the city after a year in England filming *Gosford Park*. The movie, distributed by USA Films, opens in New York and Los Angeles on December 26. "What I like about London as an American is you're not class-distincted out," he says. "You get special dispensation. You can say 'fuck' and toss the pudding about."

Altman's wry, deadpan charm is delivered in the flat tones of his native Kansas City, and he gestures elegantly as he talks. With *Gosford Park*, set at an English country manor in 1932, he has fashioned a hybrid upstairs-downstairs social commentary and murder mystery—Agatha Christie by way of Merchant-Ivory by way of Robert Altman. The who's-who British cast, in-

cluding Michael Gambon, Maggie Smith, Kristin Scott Thomas, Jeremy Northam, Helen Mirren, Eileen Atkins, Richard E. Grant, Alan Bates, Derek Jacobi, and Emily Watson (plus the American Bob Balaban, whose idea the story was), do wonderful things with Julian Fellowes's intricate screenplay. Altman is jazzed about *Gosford Park*, and at test screenings audiences have greeted the film warmly. Dare he contemplate a hit? "Be still my heart," he murmurs.

His last significant box-office success was *The Player* in 1992, and he wouldn't mind doing some business this time, too. "It's a tough battle out there," he says. "The better your picture does, the easier the next one is



▲ GOSFORD PARK: Directed by Robert Altman; starring Kristin Scott Thomas (above right); opens December 26 (USA Films).

to get—they pay more attention to you, and you get more money. But if you get one, two, three in a row that don't do so good, you fall off the cocktail-party list."

Whenever that happens, there's Elaine's. "It's great, I can come in here any time and I can always find someone to sit down and

"I GET IT ALL THE TIME: 'THE TERRIBLE POPEYE, THE BRILLIANT NASHVILLE,'—
BLAH BLAH BLAH. THESE PIECES, EVERY ONE OF 'EM, THEY'RE LIKE YOUR OWN CHILD. AND
YOU LOVE YOUR LEAST SUCCESSFUL CHILDREN THE MOST."

have dinner with—it's like a little club," he says. "And the food is . . . pretty good. I remember times here, in the seventies I guess, when we played a lot of poker. Then for a couple of years everybody was playing backgammon. Now it's just who can ring up the bigger bill."

The Altmans are Upper West Siders and lead an active life in the city—a lot of theater, a lot of dinners. Their friends include Harry Belafonte, agent Sam Cohn, attorney Jerry Walsh, and painter Yuri Kuper. If they go to the West Coast, it's chiefly to visit their children.

"I live here and I work here," says Altman, who after 27 years of working in the Delmonico Hotel ("They finally evicted me") in January moves into a new office-studio-editing facility on West 45th Street.

"Your environment rubs off on you," he says. "Here you're just stepping *into* it all the time, you can't miss it, it's in your face. I think if I lived in any other place, I'd get very

somberly. "When Bush got elected."

Which Bush?

"Does it make any difference? I have a picture from a London paper of Cheney, Bush, and Powell—nine years ago, when they were going after Saddam Hussein. Same cast, only today it's Bush Jr. And they're reaping the rewards of whatever they were protecting. I *imagine* it had something to do with money. I was in London both for the election and this, uh, World Trade business—I don't even know what to call it."

"Twin Towers attack," suggests Kathryn.

"Everybody's trying to make up a title. We should take it out and test it!"

When her husband excuses himself briefly from the table, she tells how they met.

"In 1959, I was an extra in Hollywood," she says. "I used to stand in, I used to double, I was a swimmer in the Esther Williams films, but I never had any acting aspirations. Jobs are like that when you're raised in Southern California—it was better than typing. So the casting director called and said, 'I've got a job. You're gonna love this director. He's got your sense of humor, he's a terrific guy.'"

"The, uh, Razorblades just scored," says Altman, who has returned to the table.

"So I got on the bus early in the morning to go to some godforsaken place," Kathryn continues. "And I was feeling hung over, I really didn't care. I mean, I'd never heard of a director even mingling with the extras. I got off the bus, and it was hotter than Hades. He is standing at the bottom of the stairs and says, 'How do you do? How are your morals?' And he had his shirt off, and a wet rag on his head. I said, 'A little shaky, how are yours?' We were married about three weeks later."

The meal is leisurely and steadily replenished, and people constantly drift by to say hello to the director, a shifting tide of peripheral characters and offhand, overlapping conversations that can only be described as Altmanesque. No wonder he likes Elaine's. There's the natty undercover cop who says he just gave out World Series tickets to some kids on a Harlem street. There's the large, affable priest:

"Hello, Father, how are you?"

"Still fat, but otherwise okay."

Inevitably there's Elaine Kaufman herself. She's just come from Yankee Stadium, where she only lasted a few innings.

"I figured if I come back, they'll win," she says. "I didn't know what to *do* up there."

SOME ASSUME THAT ALTMAN'S OUTSIDER STATUS in Hollywood means he's embittered about the business, but that's not the case. "There's no way that any filmmaker that ever lived has had a better shake than I have," he says. "I have never been without a film, it was always a film of my own choice, I've never had a film cut on me or taken apart—except that first film for Jack Warner. A lot of 'em were not released, and I have to get my money any place that's available, but I haven't got a complaint in the world. The journalists—I get it all the time: 'The terrible *Popeye*, the brilliant *Nashville*,' blah blah blah. I don't see it. To me, these pieces, every one of 'em, they're like your own child. And you tend to love your least successful children the most."

He pauses, looks up at the small TV screen above the bar. "This is a nightmare," he says. It's now 2-0, Razorblades.

He continues: "But whether it's a *Secret Honor* with one man in it, or this film I just finished with 40 people onstage, to me it's just the size of the painting. If I'm gonna do a mural, tell me how big's the wall. I may need some help, but I'll fill it some way."

His ideas for subjects, he says, generally come from someone or someplace else. "I don't think I've done very many original things—it's always been, 'Oh, I'll take that and just give it a little twist.' That's the kind of artist that I am. I don't think what I do is satire. I have done satire. But it's not my intention, it's just a coloring."

Does he like writing?

"Naaahhh. It's so painful. Have a scallop."

The director Alan Rudolph (an Altman friend and collaborator whose films include *Mrs. Parker and the Vicious Circle* and *Choose Me*) and his wife, Joyce, arrive from the screening.

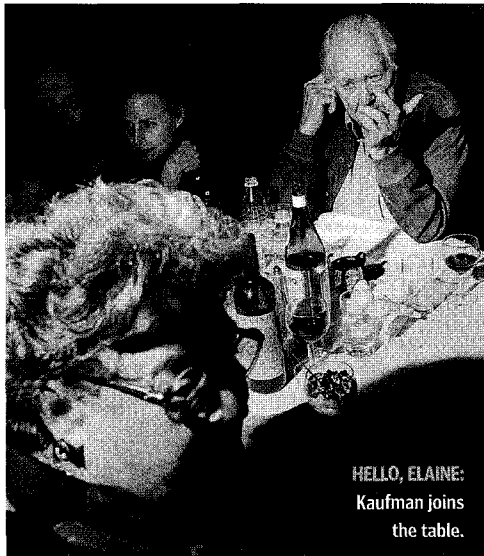
"So was it full?" Altman jokes.

"You're getting pretty good at this movie-making thing," says the younger director, grinning.

"Oh! Well, you're supposed to get better, aren't you?"

The Yanks are still losing, the restaurant is noisy and packed. More Chianti is required. Conversation centers on *Gosford Park* (Rudolph: "Bob, you think you've covered your tracks, but it's still about the warm spot in human beings") and on baseball. When Brosius homers off Kim to tie the game in the bottom of the ninth, the entire joint explodes.

"Look at that!" shouts Altman. "Well, I just don't believe this. I really don't believe this."



nervous. I wouldn't be where most of the information that I want is."

Over the next several hours, Elaine's fills up, with much of the crowd keeping an eye on the TV, where Game Five of the World Series—the night after the first Yankee miracle, in other words—is under way.

"I have found myself many times rooting against the Yankees, but it wouldn't even enter my mind today," says Altman.

Did the attacks change the way he felt about living here?

"I've been known to leave the country in the face of greater danger," he replies

Everyone settles in for extra innings. Altman tells Rudolph he's hoping for an R rating because he wants an audience of grown-ups. "There are three 'fucks,'" he says, pleased. "I put them in. I didn't want a PG film."

"Well, there *is* PG-13," says Rudolph.

"Not for three 'fucks' or more." (Altman got his R rating.)

The two directors talk actors and camera angles. Earlier, Altman had been describing his methods for grabbing an audience: "The problem is getting everybody in sync. A big shock can do it. Music of course helps. And you can hold them for the first twenty minutes without much happening." In *Gosford Park*, he says, "I tried to move the camera arbitrarily. I said, 'Don't move with the action, move against it.' I wanted the audience to feel like they had to look over somebody's shoulder."

What was that about big shocks? Because now one arrives: In the twelfth, Soriano singles to win the game. "That's my number!" Altman crows amid the pandemonium in Elaine's. Soriano wears No. 33—apparently the director's lucky number.

"Brenly's going to go home and say, 'I've got to give this up. I've got to pursue a more dignified way of making a living,'" Altman says of Arizona's manager, outmaneuvered on this night.

Dessert sherry is ordered. Just before 2 A.M. on this wild morning, the front of the restaurant bursts into cheers: George Steinbrenner, resplendent in a blazer and white turtleneck, is in the building. He works his way back to Altman's table.

"George, I *know* you don't believe it," says Altman, smiling.

"I don't," admits Steinbrenner, on his way to his own table. "Do you? If I wrote this script, would *you* buy it?"

With the detritus of a six-hour meal—glasses, plates, bottles, cutlery—arrayed before us, the director grabs the edge of the tablecloth tightly with both hands.

"Let me show you this last trick," he announces slowly, "and then I'm gonna go."

But why don't we go first. Let's move the camera as he would, against the action, past the characters and conversations keeping Elaine's humming into the early morning, out into a city whose ball club has just gone up 3-2 in the World Series. Never mind the upshot of this last trick—whether it was actually attempted, or the manner in which the table was ultimately cleared. Either way, more is to come. Robert Altman has the mischievous air of a man with many tablecloths still to yank.

pic about Puerto Rican poet, playwright, and actor Miguel Piñero (best known for his prison play *Short Eyes* and frequent appearances on *Miami Vice*) gives TV heartthrob Benjamin Bratt a chance to display his brooding, dark side.



▲ LANTANA

Directed by Ray Lawrence

Starring Anthony LaPaglia, Barbara Hershey, and Geoffrey Rush

Opens December 14 (Lions Gate)

This indie release from Australia, highly touted along the festival circuit, uses the narrative pretext of a murder investigation to probe the inner workings of several interlocking middle-class marriages. Based on Andrew Bovell's play *Speaking in Tongues*, which is currently playing Off Broadway.



▲ THE MAJESTIC

Directed by Frank Darabont

Starring Jim Carrey, Martin Landau, and Laurie Holden

Opens December 21 (Warner Bros.)

After scoring big with films based on Stephen King tales (*The Shawshank Redemption*, *The Green Mile*), director Frank Darabont cuts loose here with an original story that takes place in 1951, with Jim Carrey playing it straight as a blacklisted Hollywood writer who gets amnesia in a car crash and wakes up in a small town. Naturally, he winds up working at the local movie theater. A little Capra, a little Sturges, and a whole lotta schmaltz just might be the perfect formula.



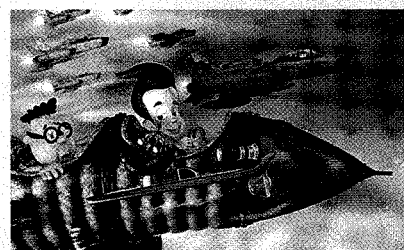
▲ KATE & LEOPOLD

Directed by James Mangold

Starring Meg Ryan, Hugh Jackman, and Liev Schreiber

Opens December 21 (Miramax)

Jack Finney's classic novel *Time and Again*, about time-traveling New Yorkers, meets *Sex and the City* in this story of a suave nineteenth-century aristocrat (Jackman) transported to modern Manhattan to woo a neurotic yuppie (Ryan). There are few straightforward romantic comedies on the Christmas lineup, so this low-budget entry has a real shot.



▲ JIMMY NEUTRON, BOY GENIUS

Directed by John Davis

Starring the voices of Patrick Stewart, Martin Short, Debi Derryberry, and Rob Paulsen
Opens December 21 (Paramount)

Paramount enters the computer-animated battleground with *Jimmy Neutron*. You may not have heard of it, but your kids have. The G-rated film is being massively promoted to the Nickelodeon crowd.



▲ JOE SOMEBODY

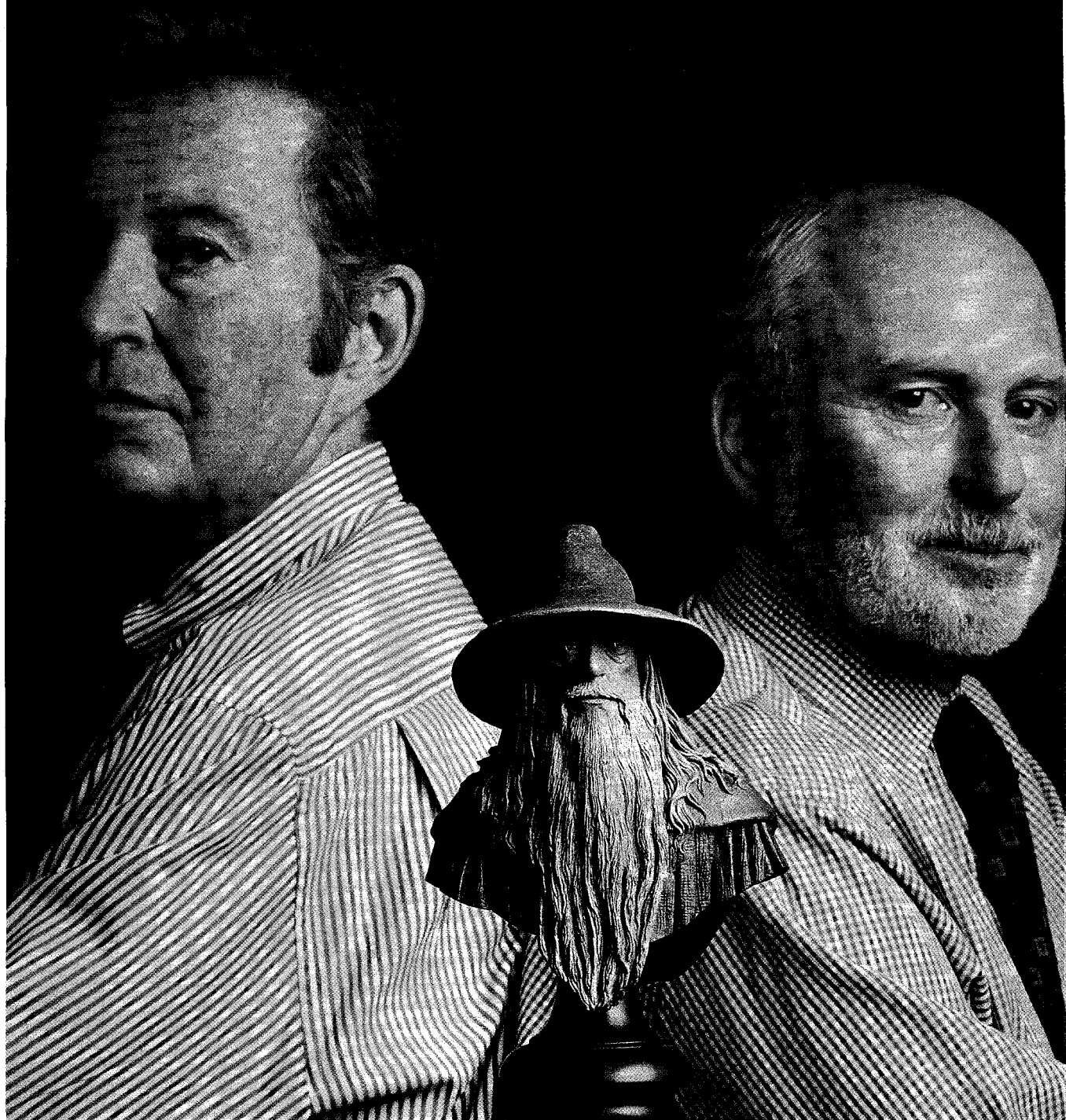
Directed by John Pasquin

Starring Tim Allen, James Belushi, and Julie Bowen

Opens December 21 (Fox)

(continued on page 51)

BETTING THE SHIRE: New Line co-chairmen
Robert Shaye, left, and Michael Lynne.



WITH THEIR THREE-FILM, \$270 MILLION WAGER ON THE LORD OF THE RINGS, ARE NEW LINE'S ROBERT SHAYE AND MICHAEL LYNNE RISKING THE COMPANY? OR IS THIS "ULTIMATE MACHO FILMMAKING" AT ITS BEST?

THE RING LEADERS

BY ROBERT LEVINE

PETER JACKSON, DIRECTOR OF *The Lord of the Rings*, says that by the time he met with New Line Cinema co-chairman Robert Shaye, "I was 90 percent sure the film wasn't going to happen." He'd been more or less cut loose from Miramax Films after the studio balked at his plan to make J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy as a two-film project, but he got the company's blessing to shop his vision elsewhere. "Everyone else had passed," says Jackson. New Line was his last stop.

"I don't think this is for us," Shaye remembers thinking. He invited the New Zealand director into his office, where he told him the project would be a tough sell, because a slice of the profits would have to go to Miramax. Then he brought up Jackson's last movie, *The Frighteners*. "He didn't like it," the director says. "Usually when you have a meeting, everyone tells you how much they like your films."

Then Jackson showed Shaye a 25-minute production reel of location shots from New Zealand and sample special effects he had put together at his production house, WETA.

"I don't know why you'd want to make two films," Shaye said when the lights came on. He told Jackson to make *three*.

"THAT'S ALWAYS THE FIRST QUESTION," SAYS Michael Lynne, co-chairman of New Line,

sitting on a black leather couch in his 57th Street office, a Hollywood-on-the-Hudson throne room with a floor-to-ceiling view of Central Park. "How could we possibly do this?"

What they did was commit in advance to a marathon fifteen-month shoot in New Zealand during which Jackson would make three movies to open Christmas 2001, 2002, 2003. Three movies by a director whose biggest film up to that point was *The Frighteners*, which cost \$30 million and earned \$17 million. Three movies starring Elijah Wood as a hairy-footed hobbit. Three movies that eventually cost \$270 million.

Shaye, a self-styled maverick with an *Easy Rider* haircut and a tie knotted just above his sternum, calls the decision an example of "prudent aggression," a motto he had emblazoned on paperweights scattered all over the office. Lynne, looking more the conventional mogul in a crisp white shirt, says that the company hedged its bet by persuading foreign distributors to commit money up front, a funding strategy that's becoming more common in the film business.

"There is no betting of the farm here," says Lynne, a bit fed up with being cast as the gambler. Once they made the merchandising deals and factored in New Zealand's generous tax breaks, Lynne says the company's financial exposure was down to \$20 million per movie. "If two movies are going to work—if they're going to work—three are going to work. It was smarter creatively, and it was smarter financially."

Even for a much bigger company, putting so much money on a film trifecta would have been scary. (While the two sequels to *The Matrix* were shot back-to-back, no one had ever green-lighted a trilogy without having had a hit with the first movie.) For New Line, a mini-major with a track record of hip indie pictures (*Boogie Nights*) and genre fare (*Spawn*), the stakes are much higher. "It's hard to remember an entity like this taking as significant a risk," says Peter Bart, editor-in-chief of *Variety*. "It's the ultimate macho filmmaking."

Not all of their international partners had the stomach for that. "There was apprehension," says Rolf Mittweg, New Line's president and COO of worldwide distribution and marketing. When in March 2000 the studio screened a twenty-minute clip for some of the 25 partners in New

Zealand, Shaye says the general reaction was "Oh, my God, we are so relieved."

Now the pressure is coming from AOL Time Warner, New Line's new parent. In 1993, Ted Turner bought the studio for \$550 million, and even after Time Warner acquired Turner Broadcasting, Shaye enjoyed almost complete autonomy. "Bob and Michael have been around a long time and no one would suggest they could simply disappear," says *Variety*'s Bart.

But if *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the first installment of the trilogy, tanks when it opens on December 19, their independence will likely be on the line. Already they were told earlier this year by AOL Time Warner to make layoffs. They were also instructed to clear any budget over \$50 million. "We make exceptions," says Richard Parsons, the company COO who will replace Gerald Levin next May. "*Austin Powers 3* is an exception. We want the different sensibility—they do different films than Warner Bros."



▲ LORD OF THE RINGS: Directed by Peter Jackson; starring Elijah Wood (above), Ian McKellen, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett, Ian Holm; opens December 19 (New Line).

If New Line seems an unlikely studio to release a *Star Wars*-scale blockbuster, *The Lord of the Rings* seems an unlikely candidate for such aspirations. Running at nearly three hours, *Fellowship* is faithful to the scope of Tolkien's imaginary world, and Jackson renders Middle-earth with the same supersaturated cinematography he employed in *Heavenly Creatures*. "Not going with one of the top two or three epic filmmakers," says Shaye—your Ridley Scotts, your Steven Spielbergs—"is the kind of risk we have traditionally taken."

So far, the early reviews have been positive and the legions of *Lord of the Rings* fans are all aflutter. Shaye and Lynne are leery of making any predictions, but they know their franchise could dominate the next three Christmases. "Everything's at stake and everyone knows it," says Lynne. "It's out there in public, and that's the rush."

A RED-DIAPER BABY WITH ROOTS IN NEW YORK'S AVANT-GARDE THEATER, DIRECTOR JESSIE NELSON GETS TOUGH GUY SEAN PENN IN TOUCH WITH HIS SOFT SIDE (HELLO, OSCAR!) IN *I AM SAM*, ABOUT A COMPLICATED DAD AND HIS STRUGGLE TO WIN BACK HIS DAUGHTER.

LEFT OF CENTER

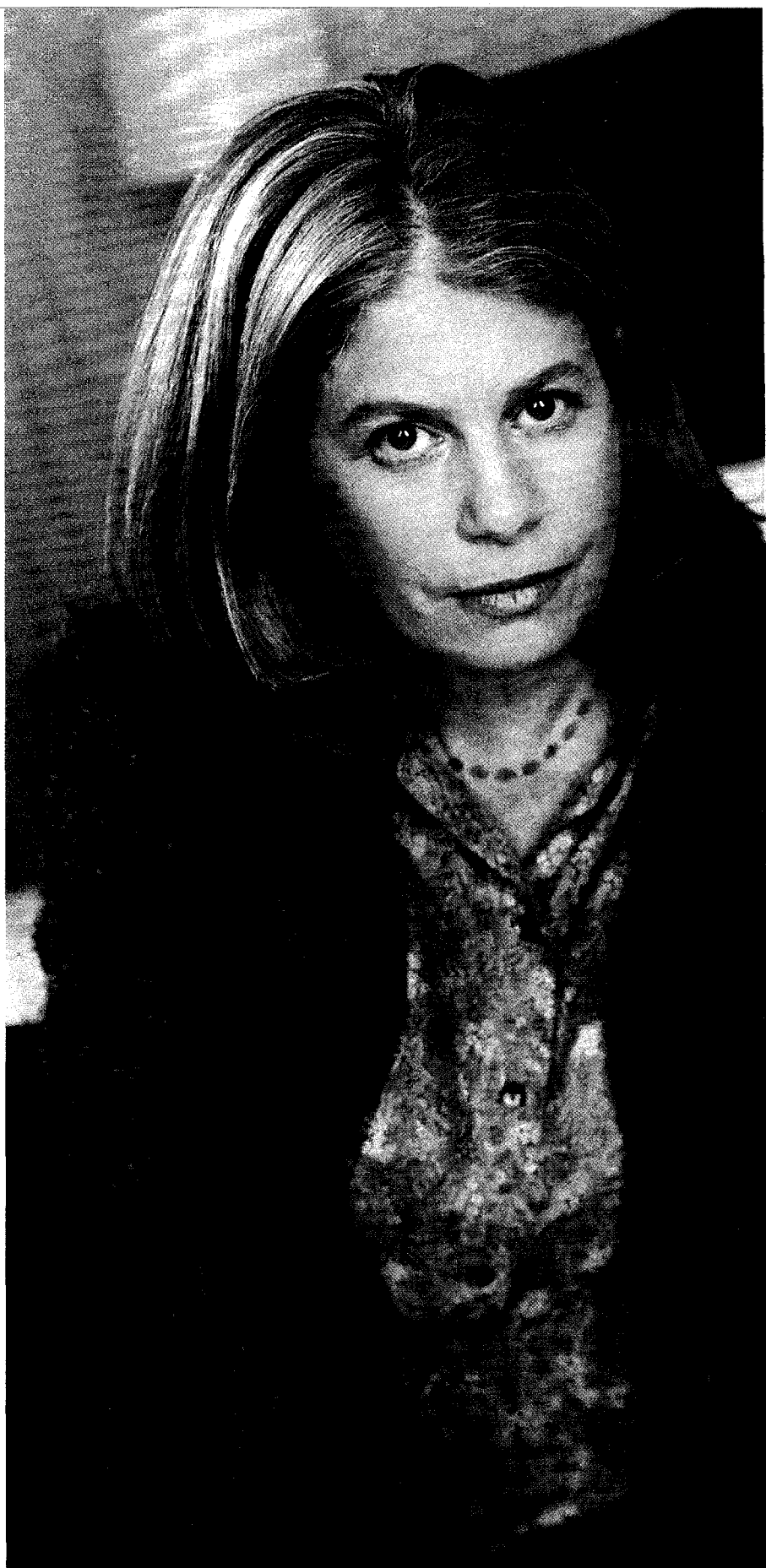
BY LOGAN HILL

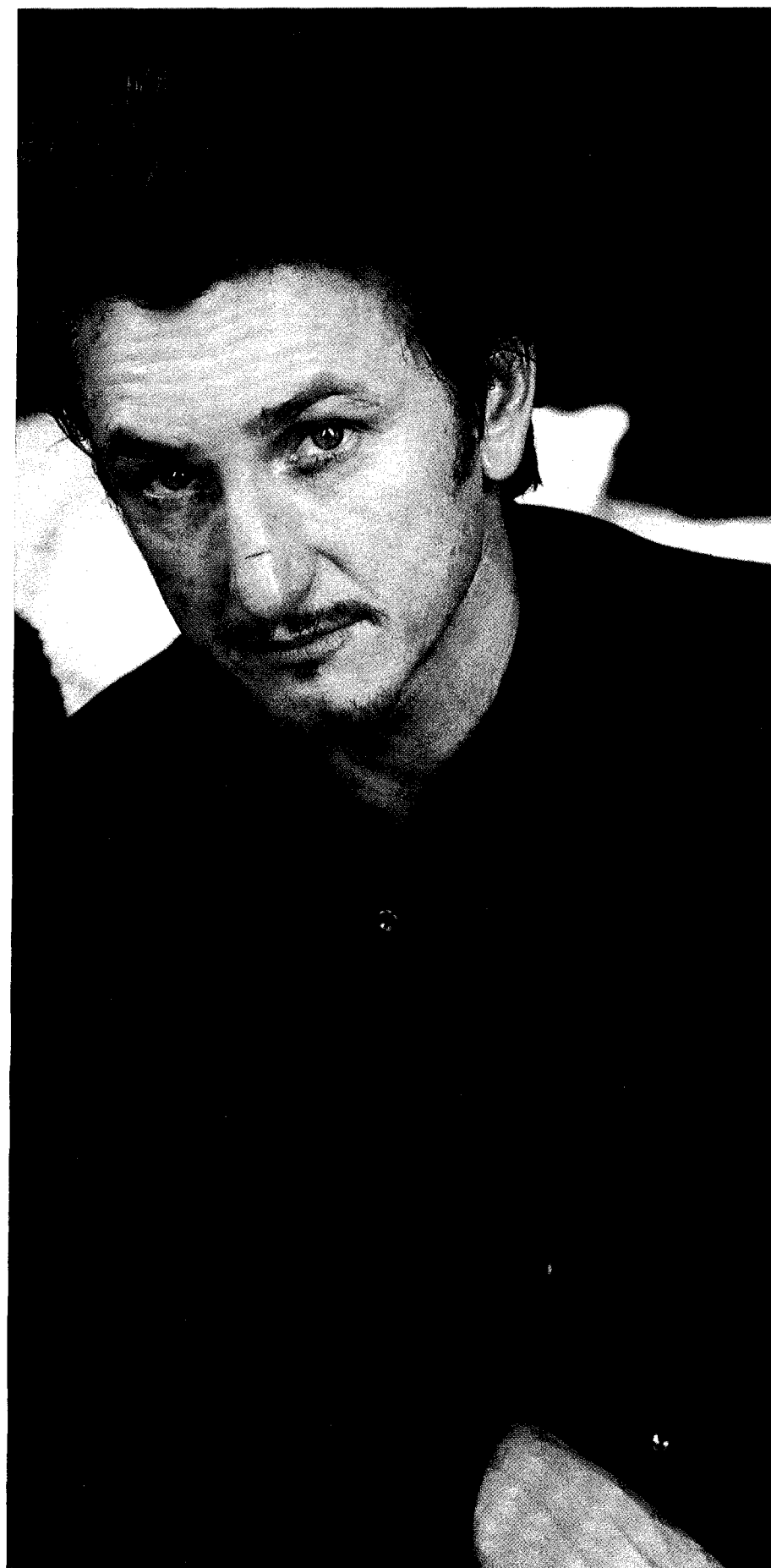
WHEN RICK Solomon and his co-producers first heard the pitch for *I Am Sam*, a drama about a retarded single father who battles his daughter's foster mother for custody, he recalls, "All of us were concerned that in the wrong hands, this could have been a movie-of-the-week."

"But Jessie didn't want that," co-producer and *thirtysomething* co-creator Marshall Herskovitz interjects. "She wanted to make a movie that was, to use her term, left of center."

Indeed, this winter's most promising heart-tugger may have left recent New York screening rooms strewn with damp tissues, but it was co-written and directed by a red-diaper baby who came of age in New York's downtown theater scene—a Hollywood filmmaker with an unabashed Manhattan edge.

"My major influences were all here," says Nelson, who dropped out of UC-Santa Cruz after the experimental-theater collective Mabou Mines visited the campus in the mid-seventies. Tanned and wrapped in a thick wool hooded sweater, with a speck of cap-





puccino foam on her nose in the café of the Regency hotel, she explains that “the idea of everybody working and collaborating on pieces with each other is still with me.”

Because of that approach, her new film—a jittery, often discomfitingly funny drama starring Sean Penn as the father and Michelle Pfeiffer as the lawyer who takes his case—hardly looks or feels sentimental. Nelson recruited director of photography Elliot Davis (who gave Steven Soderbergh’s *Out of Sight* its sophisticated sheen) and used a handheld, documentary style to establish the picture’s emotional as well as visual verisimilitude. She also drew on her ensemble experience to extract a gutsy performance from Penn, who exchanged his best-known qualities—the *Hurlyburly* swagger, the *Dead Man Walking* menace—for their opposites to play a gentle, earnest man: “I just knew that if he could play dark and brooding that well, he was going to do something extraordinary with joy and kindness.”

Nelson, Penn says, easily won his confidence: “For the last decade or two, it seemed to me like the good writers were the ones sitting in dark holes beating themselves up. When I read something that was more traditionally loving, it was always a load of crap. Jessie knows how to write joy without it being bullshit.”

Nelson, who admits to an irrational childhood fear of the disabled, spent five days a week working at L.A. Goal, a center for the developmentally challenged, for about three months to prepare for *I Am Sam*. Many scenes—from Wednesday video night to



▲ *I AM SAM*: Directed by Jessie Nelson; starring Sean Penn and Michelle Pfeiffer; opens December 28 (New Line).

Thursdays at IHOP and karaoke—draw directly from her experiences there, giving the film a spontaneity abetted by the clients’ consuming love of all things Beatles, whose music drives the soundtrack. (Nelson recruited Nick Cave, Aimee Mann, Sarah MacLachlan, Eddie Vedder, Rufus Wainwright, and others to do Fab Four covers.)

“When Sean came to the center, they were so excited,” Nelson recalls, laughing. “They said, ‘Oh, Sean! We loved you *so much* in *The Pink Panther*!’ It was perfect—you

know, you kind of had to check your ego at the door."

L.A. Goal's plain-spoken executive director, Petite Konstantin, who has had some run-ins with Hollywood before, notes, "I'm not saying any film will ever present someone's life 100 percent, but this is one of the first times we've ever seen a real attempt."

Nelson doesn't regard her accomplishment as such a big deal. "My parents were communists," she says, "so I guess I was always taught to root for the underdogs."

SHE WASN'T ALWAYS TAUGHT TO GO AFTER emotional material. As much as Nelson loved acting with Mabou Mines at the Public Theater and even waitressing at the Bottom Line ("I got to see Charlie Minus"), she felt conflicted. "Back then, things onstage were very clever, very intellectual, and very cynical," she says. "I just began to feel like there was this *terror* of emotion."

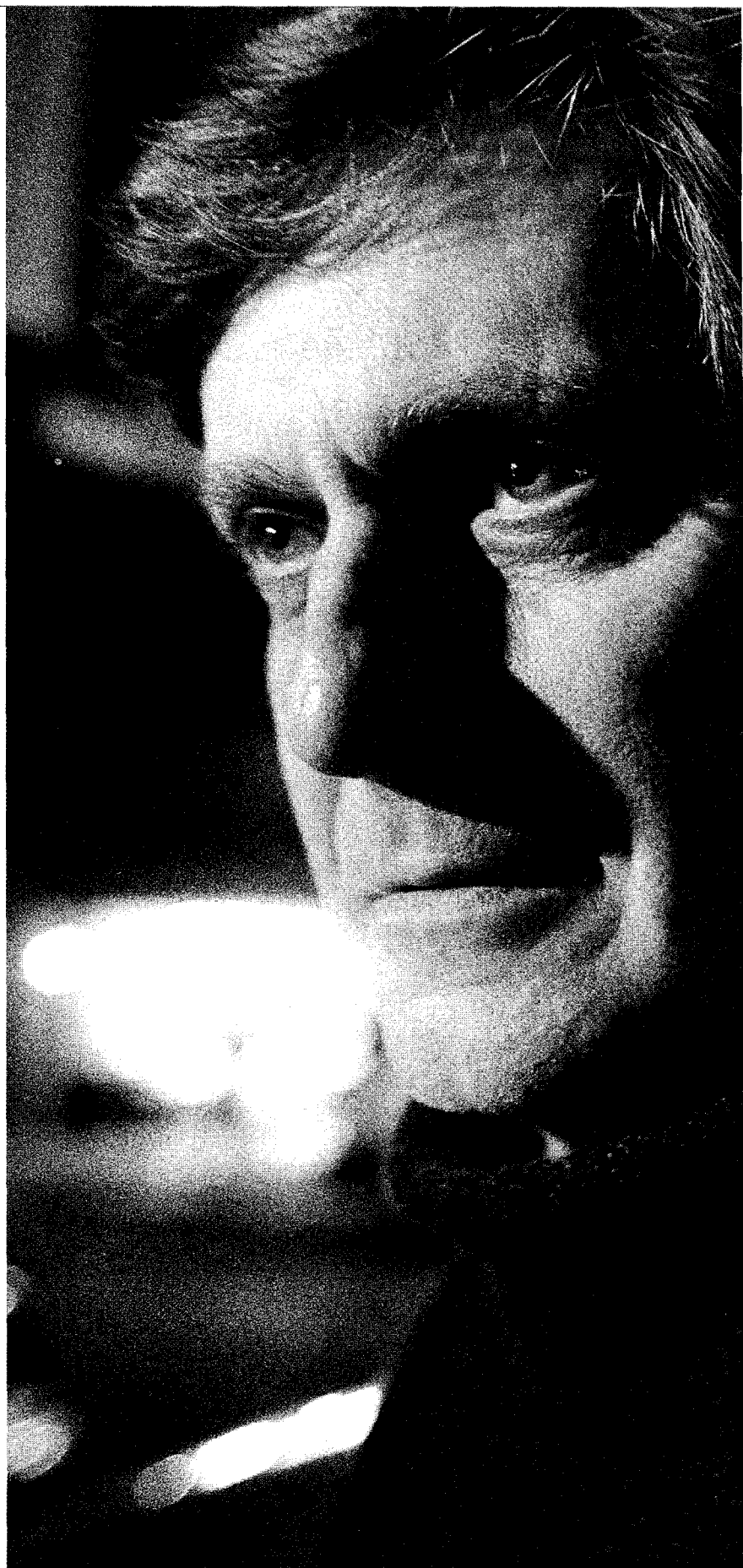
So she moved back West and tried to make it in Hollywood as an actress, then (when she realized that actors have no control) as a writer, and finally (when she realized that writers have even less control than actors) as a writer-director-producer. Her first feature was 1994's semi-autobiographical *Corrina, Corrina*. Screenwriting gigs on Pfeiffer's *The Story of Us* and Julia Roberts's *Stepmom* followed, films that for all their emotional intensity—the former tracks the roller-coaster ride of marriage, the latter a mother's rivalry with her ex's new wife—were highly polished Hollywood fare that barely registered with critics. That seems unlikely to be the fate of *I Am Sam*.

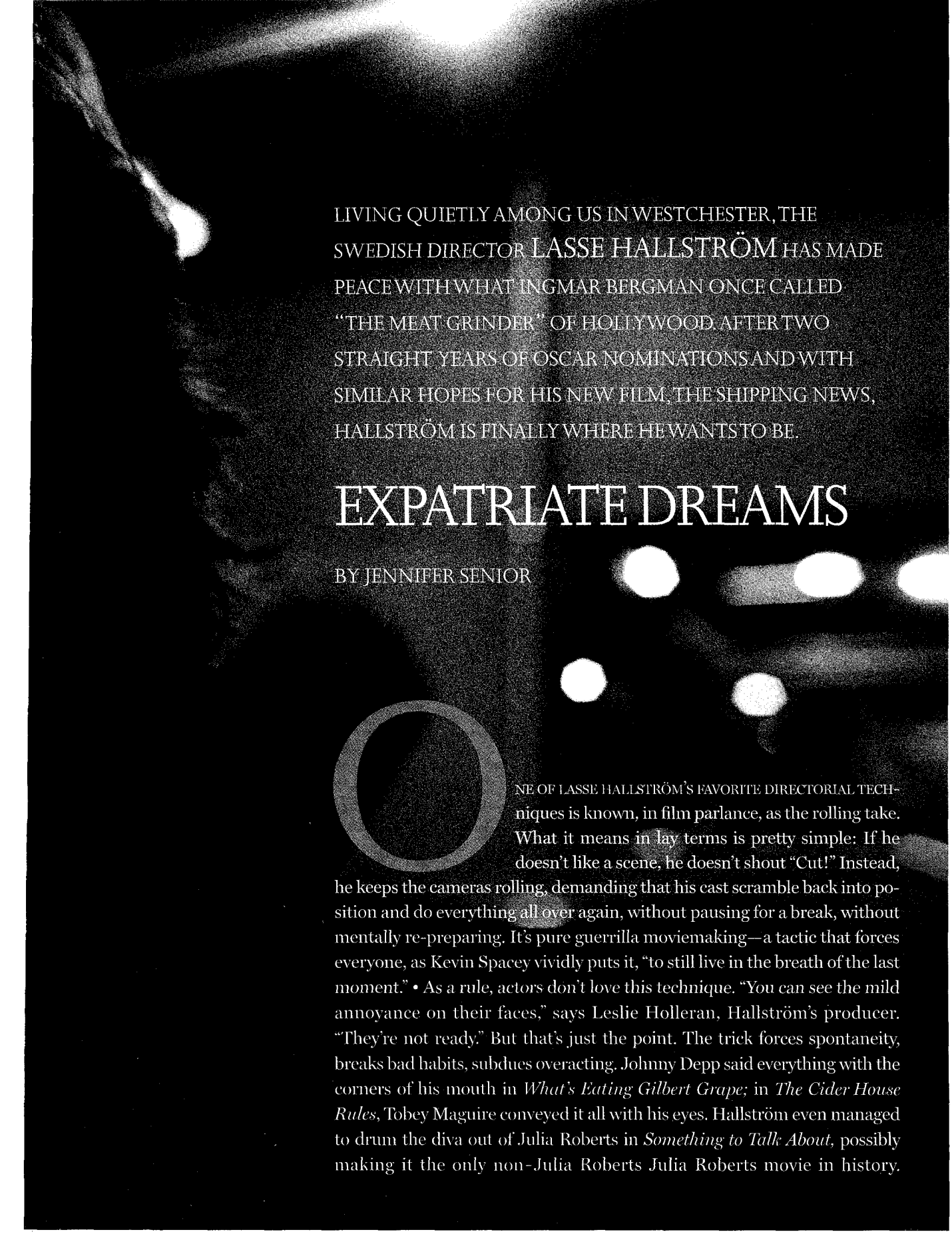
"She was on the front lines and fighting to get this movie made every day for five years," says Pfeiffer of Nelson. "She knew *exactly* what she wanted."

Most directors with a breakthrough film would be looking to fast-track their next project, but Nelson says she plans to take some time off. As she strolls out of the hotel to meet her 5-year-old daughter near the Rockefeller Center ice-skating rink, it's obvious why. "I had Molly on set a lot this time," she says, "but I don't really want to do that to her again so soon."

"There's no question she'll be back," Penn says, calling her a "Zen sweetheart."

"I think Hollywood and its audience are extremely quick to embrace audacity for its own sake," he adds, "so some directors go for that and they're celebrated and analyzed and sodomized—and then there are no pictures left in them. Jessie's not audacity-dependent that way. She's emotionally brave. She's going to make movies based on things she understands, and she understands a lot of things. That's all I want from a filmmaker."





LIVING QUIETLY AMONG US IN WESTCHESTER, THE SWEDISH DIRECTOR LASSE HALLSTRÖM HAS MADE PEACE WITH WHAT INGMAR BERGMAN ONCE CALLED "THE MEAT GRINDER" OF HOLLYWOOD. AFTER TWO STRAIGHT YEARS OF OSCAR NOMINATIONS AND WITH SIMILAR HOPES FOR HIS NEW FILM, *THE SHIPPING NEWS*, HALLSTRÖM IS FINALLY WHERE HE WANTS TO BE.

EXPATRIATE DREAMS

BY JENNIFER SENIOR

ONE OF LASSE HALLSTRÖM'S FAVORITE DIRECTORIAL TECHNIQUES is known, in film parlance, as the rolling take. What it means in lay terms is pretty simple: If he doesn't like a scene, he doesn't shout "Cut!" Instead, he keeps the cameras rolling, demanding that his cast scramble back into position and do everything all over again, without pausing for a break, without mentally re-preparing. It's pure guerrilla moviemaking—a tactic that forces everyone, as Kevin Spacey vividly puts it, "to still live in the breath of the last moment." • As a rule, actors don't love this technique. "You can see the mild annoyance on their faces," says Leslie Holleran, Hallström's producer. "They're not ready." But that's just the point. The trick forces spontaneity, breaks bad habits, subdues overacting. Johnny Depp said everything with the corners of his mouth in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*; in *The Cider House Rules*, Tobey Maguire conveyed it all with his eyes. Hallström even managed to drum the diva out of Julia Roberts in *Something to Talk About*, possibly making it the only non-Julia Roberts Julia Roberts movie in history.

"The kinds of performances one sees on television, particularly sitcoms, are slowly seeping over into the movies," says Hallström in his impeccable, lilting English, still inflected with the singsong cadences of his native Stockholm, though he now lives quietly among us, in the Westchester suburb of Bedford. He's taking a break from editing *The Shipping News*, his adaptation of E. Annie Proulx's 1993 Pulitzer-winning novel, which Miramax will open on Christmas Day.

"There's more and more of a stylized way of doing things," he says. "You have to be much more of a policeman these days to see to it that actors stay away from that kind of . . . dishonesty."

Hallström is a sweet, judicious man, partial to giant ski sweaters, shy in crowds, gentle and nonconfrontational on the set. But I still ask, just for the hell of it, if he can isolate at least one example of overwrought American comedy that drives him loony.



▲ *THE SHIPPING NEWS*: Directed by Lasse Hallström; starring Kevin Spacey (above, with Judi Dench) and Julianne Moore; opens December 25 (Miramax).

"*Ally McBeal*," he answers. "That show is really efficient in conveying everybody's attitude. And I cannot watch it. I *cannot*. I have to take a shower afterwards."

THERE'S A POINT IN *MY LIFE AS A DOG*, Hallström's breakthrough 1985 movie, when the young protagonist, Ingemar, observes: "It's not easy to be left behind." Ingemar was talking about Laika, the canine the Russians shot into space in 1957 and left to die of starvation, but he could have been talking about the plight of any Hallström hero. Nearly all of the 55-year-old director's films revolve around the rootless, the abandoned, the outcast, the

marooned; almost all of them also take place in remote locales. (When asked if he'd ever made a film in a town of more than 2,000 people, Hallström thinks. "Ah yes! Boston!" he blurts, referring to *Once Around*, his first American movie.)

The Shipping News is therefore a logical Hallström endeavor. The story—about a battered, unremarkable newsman who finds hope and definition in Newfoundland, the province of his ancestors—is driven by character and atmosphere, rather than wretched excesses of plot. The project has been floating around Hollywood for nearly a decade, but it only saw the light of day after Hallström, Kevin Spacey, Julianne Moore, Judi Dench, and Cate Blanchett lined up behind it. The film will be the director's third December release in as many years for Miramax—and, knowing Hallström and knowing Miramax, it will probably be his third Oscar-nominated film in a row. Not bad for a man who started his career directing an Abba documentary.

In fact, as recently as five years ago, Hallström was still struggling to navigate his way through Hollywood Byzantium, even though he'd been in this country on and off since 1987. "In Sweden," he says, "a yes is a yes and a no is a no and a handshake seals a deal. It wasn't true in Los Angeles. I have since learned not to believe start dates and verbal promises. I learned to trust lawyers and agents. That took years." Hallström also spent years not working, tossing scripts aside because they were too plot-heavy and character-lite. Between *Something to Talk About* in 1995 and *The Cider House Rules* in 1999, he did almost nothing. "I stayed back in Sweden for three or four years," he says, "just being a little lazy and not wanting to move back."

That all changed four years ago, though, after Hallström's wife, the sumptuous actress Lena Olin, finished filming *Night Falls on Manhattan*. The couple settled in Westchester with their two children, splitting the difference artistically and geographically between Hollywood and Europe, and giving Hallström

a New York anchor for his career. Harvey Weinstein took notice. Since 1998, Hallström has been working for him nonstop.

"But I still regard myself as a Swedish film director living in America, doing American movies," says Hallström. "I'm not a New Yorker. Or am I?" He thinks it over. "No, I'm not. I'm from Stockholm. I've been here for four years." He goes on to explain that he and Olin still summer on the Swedish coast, still have an apartment in Stockholm. "And we speak Swedish at home," he says. "So do the kids. Keeps the outsider feel going. Keeps that freshness, I guess."

BY HIS OWN RECKONING, HALLSTRÖM was brought up in a household of warmth and creativity. Mom wrote poetry, and dad, a dentist, dabbled in filmmaking. Together, they hosted informal salons where local artists gathered to chat, debate, and watch movies. Young Lasse was always included. Indeed, he was indispensable: He ran the projector.

Yet a sense of sweet estrangement dominates the director's life and work. "He's not a good cocktail-party person at all," says Olin. "When people glide into a room with hats on their heads and their hair all in place and begin making jokes with people they don't know, he's like, *How can they do that?*"

"I understand Quoyale," Hallström agrees, referring to the protagonist of *The Shipping News*. "Self-confidence is something I constantly have to . . . reconquer." He pauses awkwardly, shifts in his leather chair. "Weird, huh? But I understand this guy, yes I do. There's sort of an unwritten law in Sweden that you shouldn't grow taller than any other tree. Don't, uh, reach for too much. Don't shine. So. It's sort of rewarded, not sticking out. I think it explains the attraction of staying in the United States."

UP NEAR THE 55TH PARALLEL, TUCKED AWAY on the remote Newfoundland set of *The Shipping News* (Trinity Bight, pop. 1,200), Hallström was as content as he'd been in a long time—perhaps because he had such a crisp vision for the film, perhaps because the country and climate reminded him so much of Sweden. During scouting, he charged right to the center of a frozen lake, testing its aesthetic possibil-

"THERE'S AN UNWRITTEN LAW IN SWEDEN THAT YOU SHOULDN'T GROW TALLER THAN ANY OTHER TREE. DON'T, UH, REACH FOR TOO MUCH. DON'T SHINE. I THINK IT EXPLAINS THE ATTRACTION OF STAYING IN THE UNITED STATES."

ities, as his stunned crew watched to see whether he'd sink. During filming, he wandered around in a mere sweater, not realizing until midday he'd forgotten a coat. Sometimes, during a break, he'd phone his wife from a windswept cliff overlooking the ocean. ("An Ibsen character," says Olin.)

Words desert him when he's asked to describe the final product. "I've been there before, mixing drama and farce, and bizarre elements with lyrical elements," says Hallström. "But this goes further. This is just wacky."

Hallström's early films were small miracles of accumulation, slowly burrowing under the skin. But *The Cider House Rules* and *Chocolat*, his more recent efforts, were longer on plot and more overtly emotional, enhanced by soundtracks more likely to induce crying than prevent it. Those who loved these films deemed them beautiful. Those who didn't declared that Hallström had succumbed to Hollywood sentimentalism—a term that exhausts the director, gives him a rash.

Regardless, he says *The Shipping News* is more restrained—"a little darker, a little more brooding. I don't think you'll find it steering near that line."

Kevin Spacey remembers a particular scene that Hallström, with uncharacteristic bluntness, made him reshoot. "Quoye, my character, is a man without malice or irony or glibness," he says. "But I thought, in this scene, that there was a bit of an opportunity to show a little backbone, where Quoye *al-most*"—he deliberately draws out the word—"confronts his aunt. So I came in with what I thought was the most minimal approach. I mean, I did *nothing*. And Lasse came up to me with this little frown and said, 'Oh, so aggressive!' And I said, 'What? *This*—this is aggressive?' And he said, 'Oh, yes, this is all wrong. Who is this? This is not Quoye! Maybe later you can do this.'"

Spacey sighs. "So I squashed my spine and removed my nuts and approached the scene with even less," he says. "So much less that I was convinced *nothing* registered. And Lasse seemed quite pleased."

Some time went by. Spacey waited patiently for his big scene, where he'd finally get to show some resolve, some fire, maybe a flared nostril.

"I thought, *When do I get to show this quality? At what point in the film?* We only had like a week of shooting left. So I asked Lasse. You know what he said? 'Your next movie.'"

Jimmy Neutron's only rival for simple-minded family fare. No Oscar fodder here, just dopey fun for fans of Tim Allen who aren't ready for schizophrenic mathematicians, novelists with Alzheimer's, or Sean Penn playing a retarded man.



▲ ALI

Directed by Michael Mann

Starring Will Smith, Jada Pinkett Smith, Jon Voight, and Jamie Foxx

Opens December 25 (Columbia)

Michael Mann never does anything small or quiet, and this long-awaited bio of Muhammad Ali should be thunderous, brutal, and controversial. Expectations are already high, with the film being touted as a best-picture nominee and Will Smith practically a sure thing for Best Actor. Eat your heart out, Spike Lee—this is the film the race- and sports-obsessed director *always* wanted to make.



▲ MONSTER'S BALL

Directed by Marc Forster

Starring Billy Bob Thornton, Halle Berry, Heath Ledger, and Sean "Puffy" Combs

Opens December 26 (Lions Gate)

Billy Bob Thornton, coming off *The Man Who Wasn't There* and *Bandits*, goes for the year-end trifecta with his unsettling performance as a Georgia prison guard who falls in love with the widow (Berry) of one of his charges on death row (P. Diddy in his first big dramatic role). A dark, quirky love story, with plenty of death and sex (pretty hot sex, reportedly, between Billy and Halle). Obviously, Lions Gate is doing a little holiday counter-programming with this one.



▲ CHARLOTTE GRAY

Directed by Gillian Armstrong

Starring Cate Blanchett and Billy Crudup

Opens on December 28 (Warner Bros.)

A romantic tale of WWII in which a Scottish woman (Blanchett) joins the war effort by parachuting into occupied France in search of her RAF lover, only to land in the arms of a handsome French resistance fighter (Crudup). Blanchett, as always, is luminous.



▲ BLACK HAWK DOWN

Directed by Ridley Scott

Starring Josh Hartnett, Ewan McGregor, Sam Shepard, and Tom Sizemore

Opens December 28 (Columbia)

The boldest holiday release of all may be this true-life account of the disastrous Delta Force raid on Mogadishu during the 1993 war in Somalia. Knowing as we do now that Mohamed Farah Aidid, the warlord who caught us with our choppers down, had connections to Osama bin Laden, is this really what audiences want to see right now? Stylish director Ridley Scott (*Gladiator*, *Hannibal*) will no doubt take us on a harrowing and visceral journey, and that may carry the day. Oscar-potential galore.

MARK HOROWITZ

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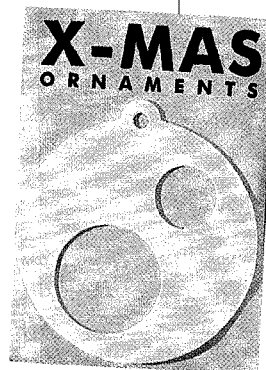
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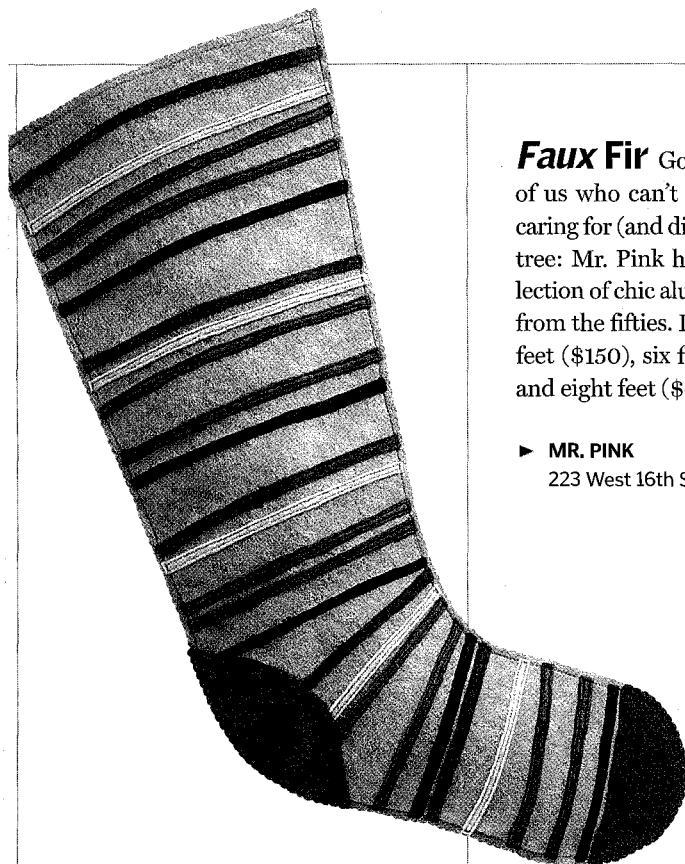
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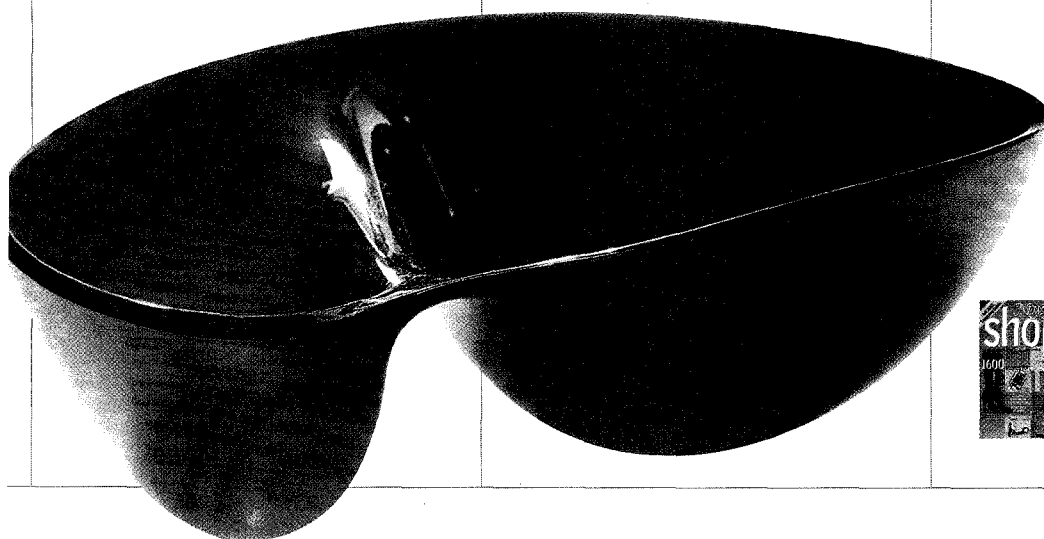
Faux Fir Good news for those of us who can't be bothered with caring for (and disposing of) a fresh tree: Mr. Pink has amassed a collection of chic aluminum pine trees from the fifties. In three sizes: four feet (\$150), six feet (\$250-\$300), and eight feet (\$400).

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Sales & Bargains

With practically the entire city on sale this holiday season, S&B can barely fit in the best events. From Madison Avenue to Atlantic Avenue, here's what you can't afford to miss.

Christian Dior's ready-to-wear and accessories, including handbags and shoes, are up to 85 percent off (\$30 to \$800). Avon Salon & Spa at Trump Tower, 725 Fifth Ave., near 56th St., fifth floor; A.E., M.C., V.; Fri. 8-7, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 11-5; 12/14-12/16.

John Bartlett's gorgeous menswear is up to 80 percent off (\$50 to \$300). 450 W. 15th St., suite 400 (212-647-9409); cash only; Mon.-Fri. 11-6; 12/12-12/14, 12/17-12/18.

Christopher Fischer's cashmere sweaters for men and women, accessories, and home furnishings are at least half off (\$30 to \$200). 1400 Broadway, near 38th St., thirty-seventh floor (212-840-1116); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Fri. 10-7; 12/11-12/14.

Diane von Furstenberg separates and dresses (including lots of those famous wraps) are up to 60 percent off (\$50 to \$150). SSS Sales Co., 261 W. 36th St., second floor (212-947-8748); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon., Wed., Fri. 10-6, Tues., Thurs. 10-7, Sat. 10-4; 12/10-12/15.

Moyna has lots of pretty, giftable accessories—evening bags, picture frames, scarves, and more—for half off (\$20 to \$100). 225 W. 35th St., twelfth floor (212-967-0760); A.E., M.C., V.; Thurs.-Fri. 11-6; 12/12-12/13.

Koos is marking down his unusual, eye-catching women's clothing, including his collaged pieces, by 50 percent. Coats are now \$300 and up; eveningwear is \$250 and up. 1283 Madison Ave., near 91st St. (212-722-9855); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon. 12-6, Tues.-Sat. 10:30-6; 12/17-12/21; 1/7-1/31.

Margie Tsai has funky knits, fur-trimmed coats, leather skirts, and cashmere shawls

for 40 to 50 percent off (\$60 to \$360). 4 Prince St. (212-334-2540); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 12-7, Sat. 12-8; Sun. 1-7; 12/10-12/31.

Liz Lange's sharp, sophisticated maternity clothes for fall and winter are now up to 65 percent off (\$29 to \$159). 958 Madison Ave., near 76th St. (212-879-2191); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.-Fri. 10-7, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; 11/21-12/31.

Zuzka, a showroom full of home furnishings (bedding, furniture, pillows), clothing and accessories (embroidered jackets, velvet dresses, scarves), and holiday decorations, is clearing house at 60 to 90 percent off (\$25 to \$700). 37 E. 18th St., tenth floor (212-260-1876); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.-Fri. 11-7, Sat. 12-7; 12/12-12/15.

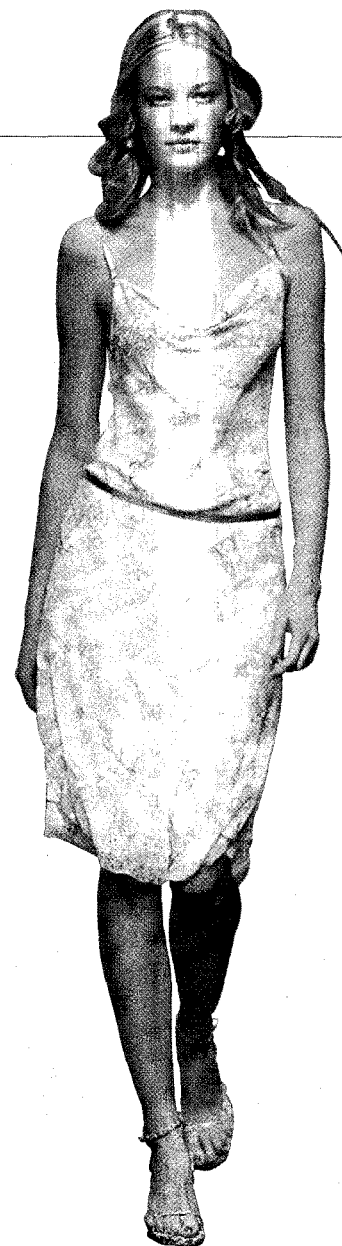
Pamela Capone's fab men's-style women's pants, sexy skirts, chunky wool sweaters, and more are less than half-price (\$70 to \$135). SSS Sales Co., 261 W. 36th St., second floor (212-683-1290); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon., Wed., Fri. 10-6, Tues., Thurs. 10-7, Sat. 10-4; 12/10-12/15.

Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue is the site of a megasale, featuring at least 10 percent off prices at all participating vendors, including stores that

sell bikes, antiques, stationery, lights, clothing, and more. For more information, call 718-403-9757 or 718-596-1866; Fri. noon-10, Sat. till 7, Sun. till 6; 12/14-12/16.

Oscar de la Renta's fall collection is at least 75 percent off (\$100 to \$1,000). 24 W. 57th St., suite 306 (212-861-8863); M.C., V.; Wed. 9-6, Thurs. 9-2; 12/12-12/13.

J. Lindeberg's sample sale means at least 70 percent off the Swedish sensation's hip,



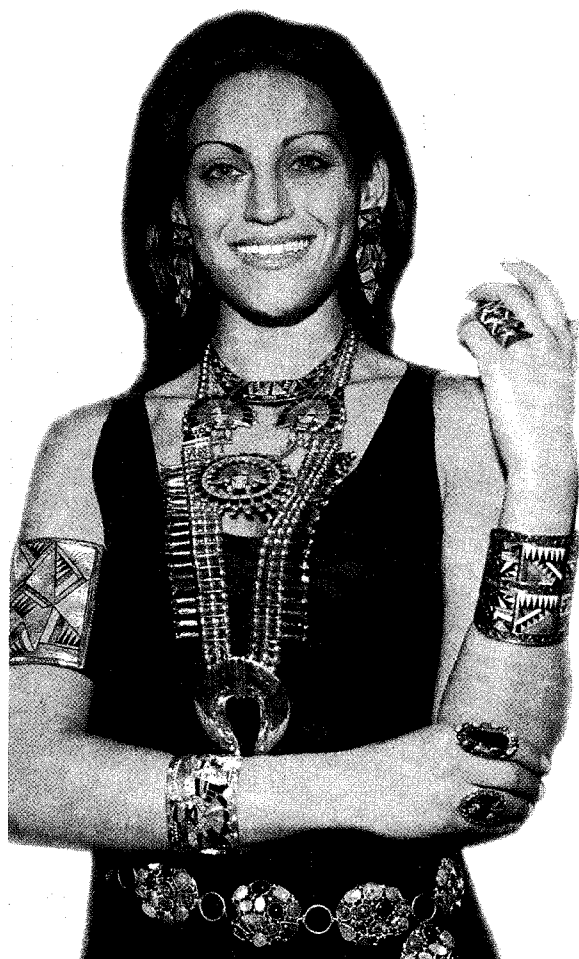
WHITE NIGHTS: A dress from Diane von Furstenberg's sale.

rock-and-roll men's and women's sportswear (\$25 to \$300). 584 Broadway, near Houston St., suite 406 (212-625-8600); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Fri. 11-7, Sat., Sun. 12-6; 12/12-12/16.

Gallery 91, the SoHo source for cool, arty home accessories, stationery, jewelry, and scarves, is closing and taking up to 60 percent off everything in stock (\$3 to \$500). 91 Grand St. (212-966-3722); A.E., M.C., V.; Tues.-Sun. 12-6; 12/1-12/31.

SEND SALE ANNOUNCEMENTS TO: nymssales@primediainmags.com four weeks before the sale starts or write to S&B editor, New York Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. For information, call 212-508-0570. Check out the fall 2001 issue of **New York Shops**, our guide to the city's best stores, including a six-month roundup of "Sales & Bargains." On sale at newsstands now. To order a copy call 800-496-7833 (\$4.99 plus \$2 shipping and handling).



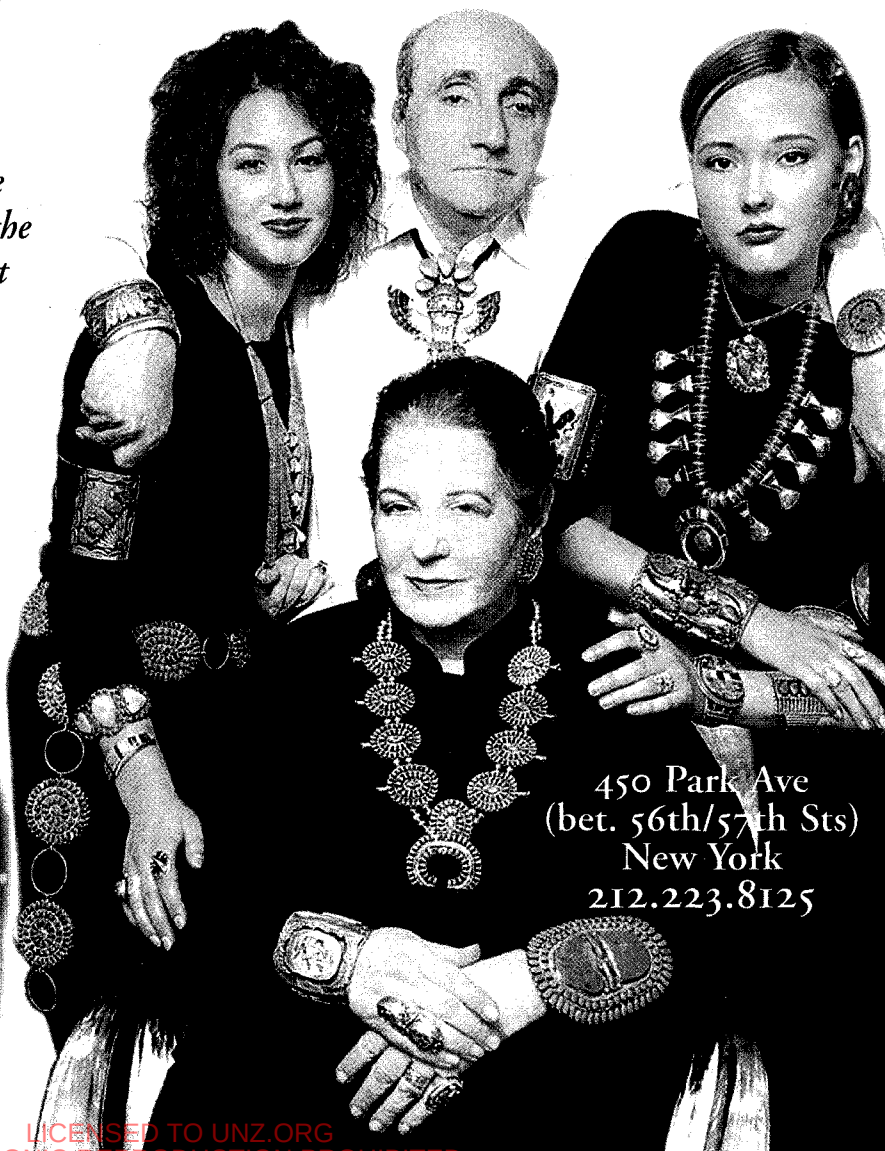


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The

A WEEKLY GUIDE TO CULTURE AND UPCOMING EVENTS • Edited by Christophe

MOVIES

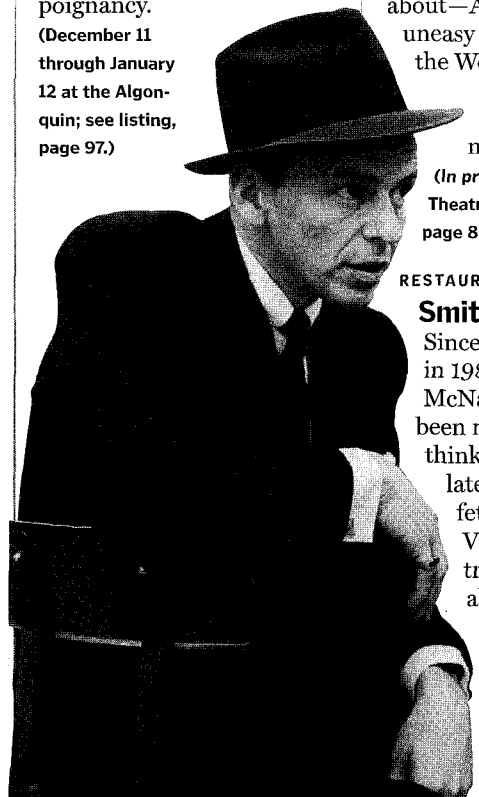
The Royal Tenenbaums

Wes Anderson's sad story of a fractured family of prodigies stars (among many others) the omnipresent Ben Stiller, Gene Hackman, and Gwyneth Paltrow, who apparently never take a day off. (Opens December 14; see Peter Rainer's review, page 60.)

NIGHTLIFE

Andrea Marcovicci

Proving as always that cabaret needn't be schmaltz and shtick, Marcovicci uses her commanding voice and carefully chosen torch songs to produce a perfect mixture of diva drama and poignancy. (December 11 through January 12 at the Algonquin; see listing, page 97.)



PRESCIENT COMPANY
Bill Camp and Dylan Baker
in *Homebody/Kabul*.

idling out front)
a neighborhood
vibe. (See page 92.)

BOOKS
**Becoming
Mona Lisa:
The Making**

of a Global Icon

The *Mona Lisa* will turn 500 in 2003 and is finally old enough to get her very own room in the Louvre. Historian Donald Sassoon examines why Leonardo's painting became an instant masterpiece and how that smile has been used to sell everything from Dada to champagne. (Harcourt; \$30; in bookstores now.)

ART

100 Rare & Important Maps & Atlases

For a whopper of a Christmas-shopping spree, stop by Swann Auction Galleries to view these images of an earlier world, including several Civil War-era Brooklyn atlases and a double-page wood-engraved map of Greece dating to 1540. Could we get Santa to bid? (December 13; see listing, page 87.)

RADIO

I'm From New Jersey

WFUV marks the birthday of Frank Sinatra, Hoboken's favorite son, with a full day of music by Garden State artists. The Chairman's own records get the noon time slot. (December 12; see listing, page 98.)

BACK AGAIN Old Blue
Eyes, on WFUV.

THEATER

Homebody/Kabul

Tony Kushner was headed into production with this, his first major work since the two-part *Angels in America*, long before September 11. The result of four years' research on a subject few Americans knew or cared about—Afghanistan and its uneasy relationship with the West—opens on December 19, with no punches pulled, no lines rewritten.

(In previews now at New York Theatre Workshop; see listing, page 81.)

RESTAURANTS

Smith

Since the Odeon opened in 1980, every new Brian McNally restaurant has been news. Now he's thinking small: His latest bistro, on a fetchingly seamy East Village block, is trying for manageable prices, substantial food, and (as long as you ignore the VIP cars

TOP five

New York Books

We all have that friend—the one who'll eat, sleep, or read anything New York. Just in time for Christmas, five new titles for that obsessive urbanite's stocking.

1. Celluloid Skyline

Shot on location or built out of plywood, cinematic New York is a city all its own. James Sanders, who co-wrote Ric Burns's *New York* documentary, explains how movies made the city—and vice versa. (Knopf; \$45.)

2. Unearthing Gotham

This ever-changing city leaves its traces everywhere. Anthropologists Anne-Marie Cantwell and Diana diZerega Wall give it the archaeological once-over, baring everything from 10,000-year-old stone tools to nineteenth-century chamber pots. (Yale; \$39.95.)

3. Brooklyn: A State of Mind

Spike Lee and David McCullough may have very different stories, but their tales, along with those of 100 contributors, converge in one borough and one big paperback edited by Michael W. Robbins. (Workman; \$19.95.)

4. New York Exposed: Photographs From the Daily News or The Post's New York

Take your pick: The *News*' classy compendium catches the city's great and ghastly moments, whereas the *Post* (celebrating its 200th birthday) talks all about itself, in a book that's as crass as the paper, and therefore great fun. (Abrams; \$39.95. HarperResource; \$18.)

5. Cityscapes

For small coffee tables, this combination of social history and rarely seen images of the city, culled by Howard B. Rock and Deborah Dash Moore, covers all the bases. But it's the often-surprising mid-century photographs that are most compelling. (Columbia; \$59.95.)

BORIS KACHKA

A Royal Scam

Wes Anderson's family farce is high style with no substance;

Vanilla Sky puts Tom Cruise through a waking nightmare.

IF EVER A MOVIE WAS DRESSED TO the nines in "sensibility," **The Royal Tenenbaums** is it. Wes Anderson, who co-wrote the script with Owen Wilson and directed it, is the cinematic equivalent of a window dresser at Barneys: Everything and everyone on display in his frame is posed, mannequinlike, for instant absorption; every square inch of space is crammed with conceptual doodads. It's not just that Anderson doesn't let anything breathe; it's not clear that there was ever breath to begin with.

I enjoyed Anderson's first feature, *Bottle Rocket*, which was loopy in a sharp, knockabout way. His next film, *Rushmore*, although overrated, had moments of emotional pungency, mostly from Bill Murray, indicating Anderson might have more on his mind than wowing us with his gift for boomerang dialogue and breakneck eccentricity. *The Royal Tenenbaums*, a dark comedy, is a bigger production than these others and has a tip-top cast, including Gene Hackman, Anjelica Huston, Gwyneth Paltrow, Ben Stiller, Danny Glover, Bill Murray, and brothers Owen and Luke Wilson. Anderson has moved up the budget ladder without sacrificing any of his peculiarities; if anything, he's an odder moviemaker than ever. Frostier, too. His movie is about a family of pathological-genius malcontents, but his dry-eye, dry-ice dramaturgy doesn't do much to draw us to them. Anderson is too damn smart for his (or our) own good.

Perhaps he's too ambitious as well. *The Royal Tenenbaums* tries to be a lot of different things: a family saga along the lines of *The Magnificent Ambersons* or *The Hotel New Hampshire*; a tribute to J. D. Salinger, especially *Fran-*



ALL ABOUT THE TENENBAUMS: From left, Ben Stiller, Jonah Meyerson, Grant Rosenmeyer, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Gene Hackman.

ny and Zooey; and a love letter to the New York that Salinger wrote about (although the film is seemingly contemporary and light on landmarks). That's too many balls for Anderson to juggle. Instead of deepening, the film zings along from tableau to frozen tableau.

The Royal Tenenbaums

Directed by Wes Anderson; starring Gene Hackman, Ben Stiller, and Gwyneth Paltrow.

Vanilla Sky

Directed by Cameron Crowe; starring Tom Cruise, Penélope Cruz, and Cameron Diaz.

Iris

Directed by Richard Eyre; starring Judi Dench.

The Business of Strangers

Starring Stockard Channing and Julia Stiles. See Movies listings for details.

Gene Hackman, piling on the gusto, plays con man Royal Tenenbaum, the family patriarch who abandoned the brood years ago and a former litigator whose financial-whiz-kid son Chas (Stiller) had him disbarred. Royal, who describes himself as "one-quarter Hebrew and three-quarters Mick," has been living for 22 years in a hotel and feigns dying to get back with his wife and children, who, for various unhappy reasons, have reassembled in the family home. Besides Chas, widowed with two young sons, there's Richie (Luke Wilson), a tennis prodigy who choked during a

tournament and dropped out of the circuit to sail the seas; and adopted daughter Margot (Paltrow), an acclaimed playwright while still in high school but now a near-catatonic who wears mink and thick black eyeliner. Richie is secretly, tortuously in love with her. Their mother, Etheline (Huston, in excellent form), carries the deadpan weariness of someone for whom life has become an unending nutso pageant.

Anderson introduces the movie as if we were watching the unfolding of a cherished novel. He gives us shots of pages turning and divides the action into chapters; a voice-over narrator (Alec Baldwin) lays out the exposition. Anderson wants us to perceive not only the charm but also the falsity of that overlit, old-Hollywood style of presentation. The implication is that his brainy distancing effects and wink-wink ironies will lead us in the end to something more emotionally genuine, cleansed of sentimentality. It doesn't really work out that way. Margot may have been zombified by her father's neglect, but, except for a marvelous scene where Royal tries to make

amends by taking her to lunch, she remains pretty much undead. Chas, who puts his children through grueling fire drills because he fears for their safety in a dangerous world, is nevertheless a furious blank. Richie, the most compelling of the trio, still comes across as not much more than a cipher in torment. What these people go through may seem horrific, but Anderson is always waiting in the wings with a cackle. He's like a smart, sensitive adolescent who is afraid to let down his guard and show us how much he cares. When he finally does drop his defenses, you may wish he hadn't.

If a more frankly emotional filmmaker had been at the helm, this family of wunderkinder who peaked early and now have only their weirdness to show for it might have resonated with pathos. Perhaps all of us, in our mopier moments, fantasize our youth as a time of prodigious promise, and regard our current life as a trickle of what might have been. Anderson doesn't draw deeply on this shared emotion, though, or make us feel much connection with the people on the screen. What he seeks in the end is their redemption; in other words, he wants to conventionalize them, flatten them out. It's a bit like watching a *Mad* magazine cover with Alfred E. Newman morph into a Norman Rockwell family portrait. Anderson is something of a prodigy himself, and he's riddled with talent, but he hasn't figured out how to be askew and heartfelt at the same time. When he does, he'll probably make the movie *The Royal Tenenbaums* was meant to be, and it'll be a sight to see.

THE MOST IMPRESSIVE MOMENT IN CAMERON Crowe's new movie *Vanilla Sky* comes early on: an unfaked shot of daytime Times Square completely deserted. It's genuinely eerie. Otherwise the film is mostly ersatz eerie. Tom Cruise plays David Aames, a hotshot executive who inherited a publishing empire from his father and carries on like a spoiled playboy. His girlfriend, played by Cameron Diaz, wants a real commitment, but David glimpses the dark-eyed Sofia (Penélope Cruz) at a party and the swoonfest commences. Based on an equally convoluted and unsatisfying 1997 Spanish film, *Open Your Eyes*, also co-starring Cruz, the movie is about the sleepy-time nightmare David endures in order to realize true love.

Didn't Cruise have enough of this am-I-really-dreaming stuff with *Eyes Wide Shut*? Crowe serves up David as a martyr: He's suffering because he wants to live a real life. (The unreal one he's leading, at least in his playboy phase, doesn't seem

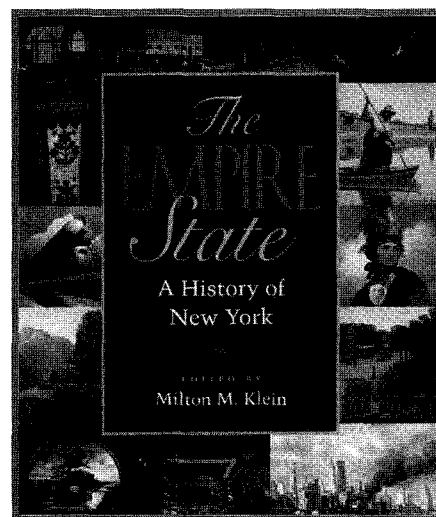
all that bad to me, but then again, I'm shallow.) On the way to salvation, David injures his face in an accident, and Cruise spends a lot of his screen time modeling his character's deep facial scars. *Vanilla Sky* is probably the most garishly masochistic star turn since Mel Gibson's *The Man Without a Face*. It could also be the most baroque chick flick ever made, the freakazoid spawn of *An Affair to Remember* and *The Matrix*.

SOMETIMES A MOVIE STRIKES A DEEP CHORD with audiences more for what it's about than for what it accomplishes. *Iris* may turn out to be such a film. It stars Judi Dench as the English novelist and philosopher Iris Murdoch and Jim Broadbent as John Bayley, her literary-critic husband of 43 years who wrote two best-selling memoirs, *Elegy for Iris* and *Iris and Her Friends*, about, among other things, Murdoch's descent into Alzheimer's. Derived largely from those memoirs, the movie employs a cross-cutting structure involving flashbacks of the courting couple, played by Kate Winslet and Hugh Bonneville (who is such a dead ringer for Broadbent that he might want to investigate his paternity). The power of this material lies in the horror of seeing a woman for whom words were everything reduced to wordlessness. It's understandable that Richard Eyre, who directed from a script he co-wrote with Charles Wood, would want to spare us a long, slow slog into despair, but by continually interrupting the sequences of the adult couple with scenes of the young pair, he shatters the emotional power of Dench and Broadbent. We don't need to see shots of the young Iris acting as a nymphlike free spirit in order to recognize what she will lose as an adult: It's already there for us to see, in Dench's grave, beseeching eyes.

IN BRIEF

STOCKARD CHANNING HAS RARELY HAD strong roles to play onscreen, but she has one in *The Business of Strangers*, as an executive who gets stuck overnight in an airport hotel with her young, pathological assistant (Julia Stiles). She's formidably good—a career woman in extremis—but the movie, which was written and directed by Patrick Stettner, otherwise unfortunately resembles a product of the Neil LaBute Finishing School. ■

Peter Rainer's reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archive/rainer.



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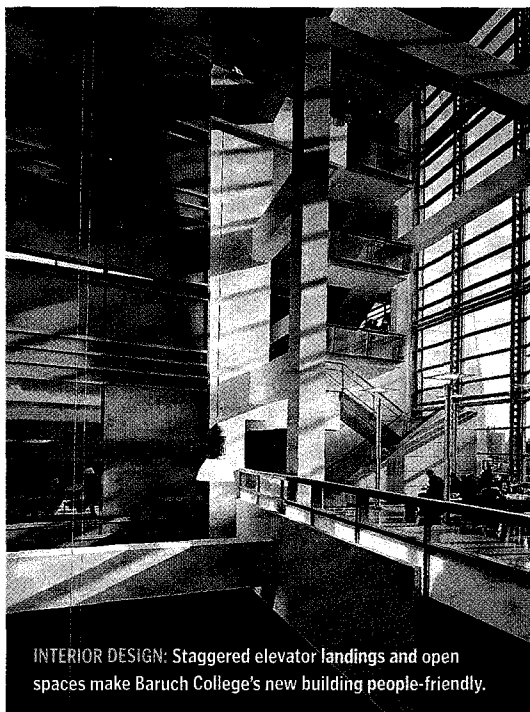
Open Admissions

With his elegant Baruch College campus center, William Pedersen attacks the isolation of tall buildings; Scholastic's new SoHo HQ is anything but by-the-book.

YOU CAN COUNT ON TWO FINGERS, maybe three, the number of buildings in New York with a flourishing public life inside: The Guggenheim, with its continuous ribbon of ramps, translates what a Piazza di Spagna might be within a multistory building; Trump Tower, with its atrium activated by escalators, a food court, shops on all floors, and a waterfall cascading over a marble cliff. The street life of New York flows into lobbies, only to stop at whooshing elevator doors. You'd never know by the strict floor-to-floor segregation inside that many buildings house populations the size of a small town or city; our vertical geometry divides and isolates us.

It could be otherwise. Interior spaces *can* be designed to cultivate a sense of community. Baruch College just opened its huge new **Vertical Campus** on Lexington Avenue between 24th and 25th Streets, in an unusual fourteen-story building with a tall façade that bows back in a long, continuous sweep to form the roof. The four corners in the upper reaches fade from sight in a zooming perspectival curve that complies with city requirements for setbacks while reducing the building's apparent mass. With a tough kind of grace, this illusionistic roof springs from a base whose multiple interlocking parts ingeniously negotiate the 785,000-square-foot behemoth into the surrounding context.

There is no confrontation with the neighborhood because the building's principal designer, architect William Pedersen, of Kohn Pedersen Fox, introduces the neighborhood's diverse materials and forms to each other under the same roof, where they reach a kind of internal agreement: The arched profile echoes the curved roof of the 69th Regiment Armory up the street, while big chunks of brick-clad façade reiterate the varied scales and masses of adjacent buildings.



INTERIOR DESIGN: Staggered elevator landings and open spaces make Baruch College's new building people-friendly.

The building's daring beauty would by itself be a major gift to the city, but the true wisdom of the design lies in the social agenda that inspired it: The Vertical Campus gets people talking—not just about it, but within and around it, as well. Pedersen has parted New York's implacable street grid to great effect. He pulled the front-entrance façade fifteen feet from the property line along 25th Street to form a long linear plaza for students, allowing just enough space for gathering, like the sideline of a football field, where students hang out facing Baruch's venerable brick-and-terracotta library across the street. He also placed the school's bookstore along Lexington Avenue, and another entrance at the southwest corner, all to capture student traffic. The street feeds the building, and the building reciprocates.

Pedersen had the option of setting a conventional tower on a conventional base

but chose instead to build the fewest number of stories in order to encourage the building's interior life. Between classes, 5,000 people shuttle among twelve floors of plateaus, terraces, open landings, and lounges teem with students reading, comparing notes, making calls, looking out over the passing parade.

The architect cracked open the huge mass of the structure like a geode to create a hollow that starts at the base and rises to the thirteenth floor, bracketed by glass walls, some of them leaning. The building occupies almost a full block, and by placing the elevator core off-center, he scooped out open space in the mid-floor area that would otherwise be nearly windowless. Resorting neither to classical unities nor to modernist purities, Pedersen exposes the Vertical Campus's component parts, retailing a vibrant mix of elements.

The push and pull of forms de-institutionalizes the structure and creates a spatial diversity that supports multiple uses. Playing social engineer, Pedersen adds programming to issues of form and space, orchestrating the building into what the Russian avant-garde called a "social condenser." The stream of pedestrian traffic is supported at the entry by a food court and bookstore, and then by student services, lounges, and the classrooms themselves.

THE SECRET TO THE STUDENT ANIMATION IS that the six elevators stop every three floors, encouraging students to walk between stops on open staircases flanked by generous landings. The hard terrazzo floors and glass walls that border the terraced atrium bounce ambient noise around, creating a sense of acoustic community. Other serendipities add to the pleasure: light dappling a student lounge on the eighth-floor plateau; reflec-

The Vertical Campus
Architect William Pedersen's
new campus center for
Baruch College.

tions in the mirrored 25th Street façade catching the classical façade of the library opposite. So far, the terraces inside are only sparsely furnished, but there is an elegant suite of teak benches in pyramidal shapes by sculptor Jackie Ferrara that suggest the full potential of these landings.

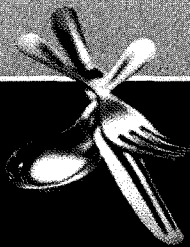
The architects cleverly bypassed luxury materials in favor of the greater luxury of abundant light and open space. The budget of \$215 per square foot may be modest even by New York-school standards, but Pedersen has managed to design a handsomely finished, urbane building, proving that a public college need not give its students bargain-basement design. From concept to light fixture, the Vertical Campus is an extraordinarily rich building, complete in the way a thriving city is complete, with many moving parts performing in an intense urban ballet. It is already a keystone of the school and the neighborhood, and it represents a rare and welcome realization of the socializing potential of buildings. New York could have many more neighborhoods than the ones on the map.

IT TAKES ALL KINDS OF DANCES TO MAKE A city, and the architectural step the late Aldo Rossi performed for **Scholastic Inc.** in SoHo is an even fox-trot. Rossi in the sixties expanded the emotional range of architecture by acknowledging the personal and cultural memories that buildings contain. He designed, really, by recalling the forms on the kitchen stove from his childhood. He was the perfect choice for a client in the business of edifying kids.

On the Broadway façade, Rossi, working with Morris Adjmi out of their New York office, the Studio di Architettura, created a post-and-beam design that is a graphic essay in gravity flow and architectural support. Four half-round, buff-colored columns support red steel beams whose strong horizontal lines hyphenate the buildings on either side. As the floors shorten on the upper stories, the building gets more dense, culminating in a cornice line of three I beams laid atop one another. On the even more interesting Mercer Street side, Rossi responds to the street's industrial character with webbed beams resting atop tapering steel legs.

Rossi wanted to be an ensemble player, creating façades different from the others but still clearly belonging to the same tradition. The result is a modest but fitting piece. If in some way the city is an encyclopedia, we are fortunate to have this posthumous entry under *R*. ■

Joseph Giovannini's reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archives/giovannini.



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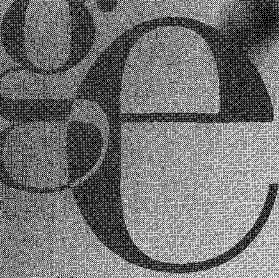
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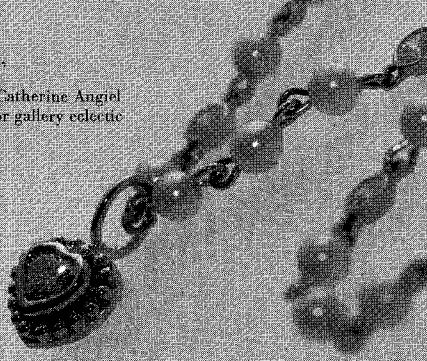
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Eternal Parfait

Political, theological, archaeological—slice it any way you want, the Middle East reveals layer upon ever-shifting layer, each bending or cracking from the pressure above and below.

AFTER YET ANOTHER HORRIFIC week of suicide bombings—a bus in Haifa, a mall in Jerusalem—I am resolved not to return to Israel. Whether religion organizes violence, or beauty itself is toxic, or the desert makes you crazy, those Western Walls and fairy-tale mosques and bloody sepulchres, those prophetic stones, hermetic cults, and siege mentalities, those Second Comings, Third Temples, catacombs, and citadels, don't need tourists like me to help hallucinate.

With my pale skin, male chromosomes, U.S. passport, and gold credit cards, I will hide in the World Trade Center. But the children we meet in **Promises**, the prize-winning film that concludes this season's *POV* series, have nowhere else to go. Moishe, Mahmoud, Shlomo, Sanabel, Faraj, Daniel, and Yarko, ages 10, 11, 12, and 13, are the sons and daughters of rabbis, journalists, and jailbirds, as well as a geography of checkpoints—from the Old City to a fortified West Bank settlement to the Deheishe refugee camp to such states of mind as Gaza and Masada. They were interviewed by B. Z. Goldberg, Justine Shapiro, and Carlos Bolado toward the end of one millennium, with a depressing follow-up at the start of the next. If we were hoping for a rapprochement, we were foolish.

They are, of course, appealing, whether standing in line to visit a father in prison or attending a memorial for a victim of a drive-by shooting or contemplating the rubble of what was once your grandmother's home. And articulate, kicking around ideas like soccer balls. And media-savvy, too, mugging for the camera. But they are also curious and venturesome, which is why the volleyball twins Daniel and Yarko agree to spend an afternoon with Faraj, the sprinter, and so meet Sanabel.



BEYOND HALLUCINATION: Faraj, one of the children in *POV*'s "Promises."

But their heads are full of what their parents tell them, what their teachers teach, what politics and history thrust upon them, and slogans of romance and death. They may not have wanted to be "Children of the Stone," but they didn't have a choice. They were conscripted.

Solomon at Megiddo, and Joshua in a basket of skulls. See them insult one another as if their respective investments in a warrior or a pastoral past will ever be of any use to Moishe, Mahmoud, Shlomo, Sanabel, Faraj, Daniel, and Yarko. Ask yourself if this carbon-dated agitprop is what Herzl wrote his play about; if this is what revisionists from Odessa, socialists from Bobruisk, interpreters of Maimonides, and world-reforming vegetarian violinists really meant by Zion.

VINEYARDS AND OLIVE GROVES, VIPERS AND goats, chalk and salt—all this, plus three religions, although **Jews & Christians: A Journey of Faith** mentions Islam only once, in ghostly passing. These are nevertheless a remarkable couple of hours, in which the talking heads—priests, rabbis, theologians, scholars, half the faculty of the Divinity School at Harvard—have something pointed to say, and ordinary citizens get to say something back. So, besides looking at more travel footage of the Sea of Galilee and the Western Wall, we hear about Fa-

Promises

Thursday, December 13; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; Channel 13.

Digging for the Truth: Archaeology and the Bible

Monday, December 17; 9 to 11 P.M.; The History Channel.

Jews & Christians: A Journey of Faith

Sundays, December 16 and 23; 7 to 8 P.M.; Channel 13.

NOW LOOK AT THEIR ELDERS IN action, in **Digging for the Truth**. This is the story, well told and infuriating, of archaeology in the holy land with its own ideological agenda. That agenda is either to verify or to discredit the Bible as history, as if ancient Aramaic scribble on Dead Sea papyrus were a deed in perpetuity, an eyewitness exoneration, or a license to kill. See these scientists dream their identity politics over Stone Age teeth and Bronze Age toenails, smashed pottery, shattered frescoes, catapult stones, and holes in the ground. See them seek David in a tunnel or at Karnak,

ther Abraham, circumcised Jesus, the Lord's Prayer ("kosher to the hilt"), law versus love, baptismal waters, atonement and forgiveness at Yom Kippur and Easter, "supercession," "triumphalism," "holy envy," Vatican councils, and the Holocaust. What is proposed, without chicken soup or sentimentality, is a partnership of faiths.

Better too late than bloody never.

IN BRIEF

• **Methuselah Tree** (DECEMBER 11; 8 TO 9 P.M.; Channel 13) looks at the past 5,000 years from the point of view of a many-ringed California bristlecone (given voice by the poet Roger McGough), imagining the pyramids, the seismic shock that sank Minoan civilization, the machine age, and the nuclear era, all to achieve Disneyland.

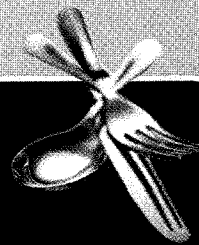
• **Jane Doe** (December 11; 9 TO 11 P.M.; USA) is a surprisingly satisfying thriller in which Rob Lowe, the CIA, computer technologists, dealers in arms and germ warfare, kidnappers, drug lords, and Cuban transvestites don't stand a chance against a red-haired single-mother (Teri Hatcher).

• **Wheel of Life** (December 12; 9 TO 10:30 P.M.; Channel 13) is kung fu instead of Irish step dancing. The Shaolin monks of Hunan, China, team up onstage with composer Barrington Pheloung, choreographer Darshan Singh-Bhuller, and director Micha Bergese to retell their origin myth in leaps and bounds, a sort of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Carradine*.

• **Off Season** (December 16; 8 TO 9:30 P.M.; Showtime) requires Hume Cronyn to play Santa Claus on a Florida vacation so that Rory Culkin recovers from the accidental death of his parents, his bartending aunt Sherilyn Fenn gets her chance to sing torch songs in a nightclub, and a very confused Adam Arkin can choose between dentistry, law enforcement, and Tennessee Williams.

• **A Town Without Christmas** (December 16; 9 TO 11 P.M.; CBS) sends a cynical and lonely TV reporter, Patricia Heaton, to the Northwest sticks to find a child who has threatened to commit suicide on Christmas Eve. She will, instead, find Rick Roberts, a novelist who is trying to track down a painter who may have been the lumberjack who saved his life as a child. Almost everybody else in this heartwarming TV movie is played by Peter Falk. ■

John Leonard's reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archive/leonard.



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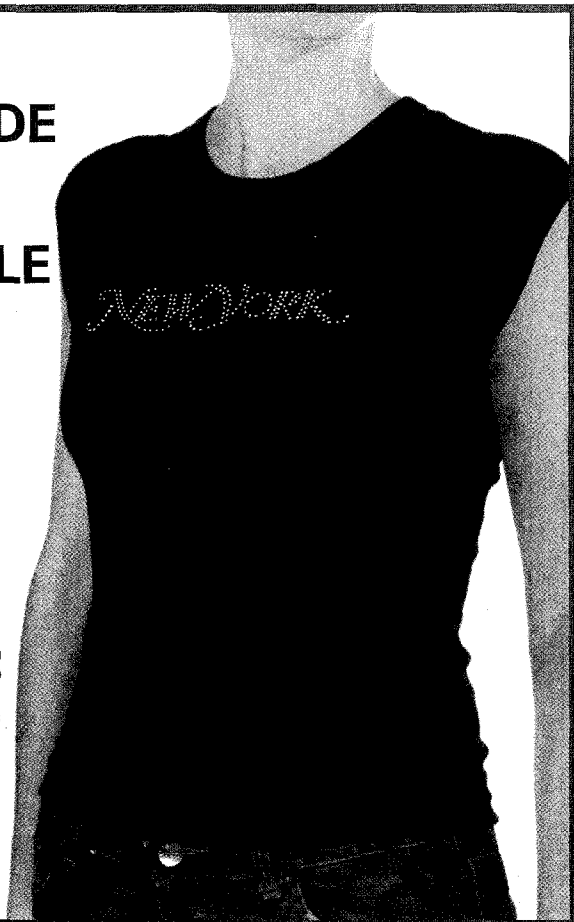
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Off-Peak Performance

Renée Fleming may be at the height of her vocal powers, but in *Arabella*, she reveals some troubling mannerisms; Andreas Scholl was well worth waiting for.

BLESSED WITH A VOLUPTUOUSLY beautiful and flexible soprano now at its mature high noon, Renée Fleming has the international opera world by the ear, and rightly so. Savor the moment—it never lasts long enough. Naturally, the Metropolitan Opera wants to make use of her services as often as possible, and in ways that show off her vocal persona to best advantage. Currently she is appearing in *Arabella*, a production as lavish and luscious as its star's voice, and I wish I had enjoyed her performance more. Fleming has everything it takes to excel as the adorable heroine of this final collaboration between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal—the creamy notes, the

physical beauty, the easy stage confidence, the banked inner fires that warm a deceptively cool exterior as she looks for Mr. Right in old Vienna—but I still came away disappointed.

Mannerisms and bad habits have lately crept into this valuable singer's vocal style, and they are beginning to irritate. Something as basic as a clean attack on the initial note of a phrase no longer happens very often. Fleming almost invariably swoops in a fraction below the pitch and then cultivates a slippery portamento more appropriate for impromptu jazz scatting than singing an opera by Strauss,

whose carefully shaped vocal lines define *Arabella*'s character so exquisitely. Yes, Fleming's tone is always gorgeous, for all the slithery articulation and suspect intonation, but this is no way to sing Strauss or to explore the musical personality of one of his subtlest heroines. For me at least, a potentially distinguished performance was fatally undermined.

While I am ringing an alarm, what has happened to Barbara Bonney? Her light, silver-bell soprano is ideal for Zdenka, *Arabella*'s kid sister, but her voice has seriously weakened up top since I last heard it, while the middle register also lacks support and projection. Only a temporary situation, one hopes. The third link in this unhappy trio, Hans-Joachim Ketelsen, is merely competent, a Mandryka with little charisma or vocal glamour. The best

news about this revival is Christoph Eschenbach's conducting. My memories of Met *Arabellas* go right back to the beginning, the American premiere in 1955, and not even Rudolf Kempe, the wonderful conductor of that performance, found more color, instrumental detail, sentiment, and dramatic vitality in a score that sounds more glorious each time I hear it. The supporting cast is also first-rate: Raymond Very (Matteo) and Adam Klein (Elemer), winning interpreters of two tenor roles with few rewards for much hard work; Eric Halfvarson and Judith Forst, vocally and visually impeccable as *Arabella*'s low-living parents; and Laura Aikin, a Fiakermilli whose cork-popping coloratura in the party scene is positively awesome.

THE GERMAN COUNTERTENOR **Andreas Scholl** recently made his belated New York recital debut in Weill Hall, much too small a venue to accommodate everyone who wanted to hear him, but just the right size for both this sweet-voiced troubadour and the lutenist Karl-Ernst Schröder. Not long ago, countertenors were regarded as exotics, and most audiences figured that one piping falsettist sounded pretty much like another. No more. Not only do Scholl and his American counterpart, David Daniels, get star treatment, but connoisseurs find their vocal styles as different as those of, say, Callas and Tebaldi. Indeed, the comparison is apt. Even in recital, Daniels is a stage animal whose singing crackles with drama, while Scholl tends to be, if not exactly elegiac, a more reflective spirit who produces an equally lovely sound.

Of course, Scholl's program did not exactly call for high-powered melodrama. The music was drawn from his two most recent recitals recorded for Decca, a compilation of early-seventeenth-century English song and Italian madrigals and familiar folk

Arabella

Opera by Richard Strauss;
starring Renée Fleming;
conducted by Christoph
Eschenbach at the
Metropolitan Opera;
See Classical and Dance
Listings for details.

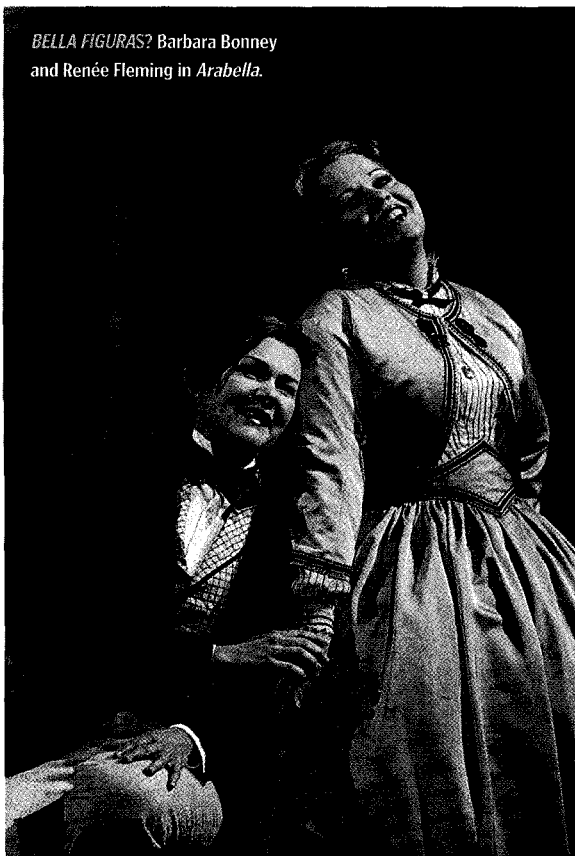
Andreas Scholl

Recital at Weill Hall.

Risurrezione

Opera by Franco Alfano;
conducted by Fiora Contino
at Alice Tully Hall.

BELLA FIGURAS? Barbara Bonney and Renée Fleming in *Arabella*.



songs from the British Isles. Singing in flawless unaccented English, Scholl cultivates all the classical virtues: pinpoint intonation, smooth register alignment, perfect legato phrasing, and a storyteller's sense of what the words mean. His art is refined but never precious, and the voice per se is simply ravishing. Scholl has so far only dipped a toe into opera, and it will be interesting to see how this completely finished singer adapts to the stage.

THANK HEAVEN FOR TEATRO GRATTACIELO. Any opera lover who harbors a guilty passion for verismo opera—a vague term used to describe the florid music theater that flourished in Italy during the early 1900s—has precious few opportunities to see or hear these still-unfashionable, and virtually impossible to cast, operatic melodramas. For the past five years, Teatro Grattacielo has come to the rescue by offering a concert version of a choice work from the period, and this year's pick, performed in Alice Tully Hall, was Franco Alfano's *Risurrezione*, based on Leo Tolstoy's last novel and first seen in 1904.

Although Alfano went on to compose many more operas, and in a far more advanced idiom than this early Puccini-esque score, *Risurrezione* remained his most frequently performed work, in Italy at least, and a gift to any singing actress eager to chew up the scenery. The role of Katiusha was a favorite with Mary Garden during her late years. The divine Mary always said she loved the part because it gave her a chance to play a different character in each act: an innocent girl in love, an abandoned unwed mother, an embittered hysteric jailed for prostitution, and finally a woman whose soul is resurrected in the bleak prison camps of Siberia. The opera has been kept alive recently by two classic recordings from the Italian Radio featuring magnetic performances by cult divas Magda Olivero and Clara Petrella.

Hardly in their class, Allison Charney made a game stab at Katiusha, but she lacks the vocal and dramatic authority to put the role over—and, let's face it, mere competence in verismo opera simply won't do. Her colleagues in the large cast were all at least well prepared and enthusiastic, and one came away with a reasonably accurate idea of the piece. That was mostly thanks to the supple and subtle conducting of Fiora Contino, an amazing musician in her seventies who may be the last conductor on earth with the music of Alfano and his generation in her bloodstream. ■

Peter Davis's reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archive/davis.

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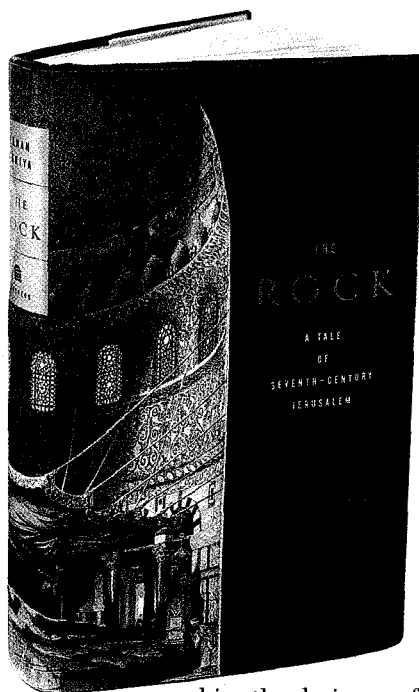
Upon This Rock

Kanan Makiya explores the holy spot claimed by three great—but contentious—religions. Can this source of epic friction yet become common ground?

KANAN MAKIYA'S FIRST NOVEL, *The Rock*, is deeply concerned with "explosions," with things that "erupt" in Jerusalem; the fact that it's set 1,400 years ago doesn't make it any less relevant to today's grim headlines. The violence that preoccupies Makiya is, if anything, even older than the seventh century. It's the violence of Creation itself—an act that the Iraqi-born author, an architect by training and (in his nonfiction writings) a fierce anti-Saddam polemicist, describes as "explosions of form into unformed space." And yet the point of his dense and deeply felt novel is to tie together those long-ago explosions with the ones you're reading about right now.

According to certain traditions, the Creation began at Mount Moriah in Jerusalem; that craggy hill—the "Rock" of Makiya's title—is, disastrously as it turned out, holy to three faiths. It's the spot where Adam is said to have fallen after his expulsion from Paradise, and where Abraham went, ready to sacrifice Isaac. It's where Jesus preached and Muhammad ascended to Heaven, and where Solomon's Temple once stood and on which the Dome of the Rock now stands. *The Rock* recalls the events that led to the construction of that shrine following the Arab conquest of Jerusalem in the mid-600s. But whatever his novel's superficial preoccupation with architecture, Makiya's real interest here is what he clearly considers—given the literally common ground that the three faiths share—to be the fatal absurdity of the internecine violence.

The novel is narrated by one Ishaq, the son of the (real-life) sage Ka'b al-Ahbar, the trusted, Jewish-born adviser to the second caliph, Umar, who took Jerusalem from the Christians around 634. About the real Ishaq almost nothing is known; for his own fictional purposes the author makes



The Rock
By Kanan Makiya
Pantheon; 352 pages;
\$26.

him the designer of the Dome. The ongoing conversations between wise father and naïve son are Makiya's vehicle for exploring much larger historical and religious issues. At one point Ishaq asks his father, referring to the sacred Black Stone in Mecca and the Rock in Jerusalem: "What is left that is harmonious between peoples who face different Rocks in prayer?" Ka'b seems to think the answer is a lot.

Makiya, by provocatively making the psychologically and theologically conflicted Ka'b the real hero of this novel (born Jewish, he becomes a fervent follower of Islam yet ultimately fails to convert), movingly emphasizes the need to bring Jerusalem and Mecca "back into an uneasy embrace."

Throughout *The Rock*, the author pointedly uses imaginative re-creations of historical events to suggest that the essential relationship between the faiths is one of similarity rather than difference. The long, central set-piece of the novel is the meeting between Umar, Ka'b, and

Sophronius, the Christian prelate who officially handed the city over to the Arabs. As the three tour the Holy City, it's clear from their elaborately polite exchanges about the various sites they're seeing that they have more in common than first meets the eye. Makiya weaves into such scenes paraphrases of various scriptural accounts of the Creation and the Fall, the sacrifice of Isaac, and numerous other stories relating to the Rock. The fact that the author never indicates which scripture he's quoting is part of his strategy to emphasize unities rather than divisions. Readers who haven't been to Sunday school in a while will have to search the 70 pages of dense notes at the back of the book to figure out whether they're getting the Koran, or the Old Testament, or the New.

That's Makiya's point. God, according to Ka'b, "intended the universe . . . as a consonance of different parts. . . . My work is to fit them back together again in the right way so that they return to harmony." If Ka'b fails to maintain harmony in the end, it's possible that Makiya does so as well. Too often, the attempts to weave disquisitions on theology or Arab dynastic history into a persuasive fictional framework fizzle. (Characters tend to square off and say things like, "In a certain class of human minds, the principle of idolatry is never truly eradicated.") Still, it's hard not to be moved when Makiya climactically ties together the creation of the Dome and the Creation itself, of which the Rock is the eternal reminder. All three—Creation, Rock, Dome—are explosions of form in unformed space, and all three mark, in their different ways, the way in which "beauty erupted into the world." Right now, it's no small thing to be reminded, as this unusual book so determinedly reminds you, that the Holy City could have been the site of creative harmonies, rather than destructive dissonance. ■

Daniel Mendelsohn's reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archive/mendelsohn.

A Stone Alone

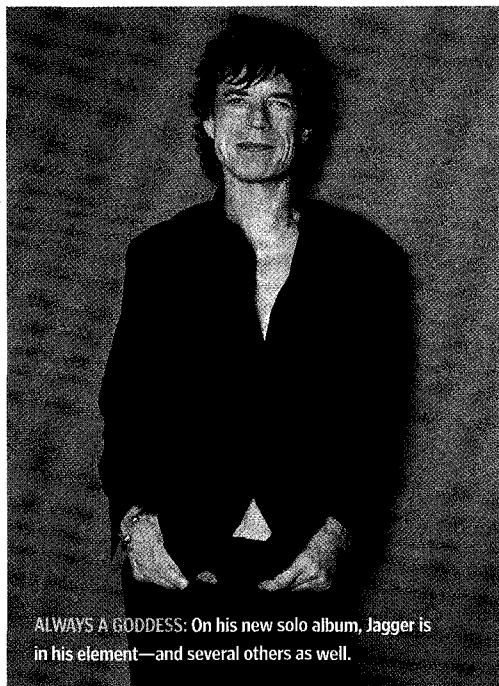
Mick Jagger's mixed bag of an album is his most forward-looking work

in years; Paul McCartney sticks with what he knows—and does—best.

I ALWAYS HATE NOSTALGIA / living in the past," Mick Jagger moans at the beginning of "Too Far Gone," a sentimental ballad on his new solo album, *Goddess in the Doorway*. "No use getting misty-eyed / It all screamed by so fast." It might sound like a bit much coming from a 58-year-old who makes a living celebrating his youth in front of thousands, but as a solo artist Jagger has gone to great lengths to show time is on his side: He's recorded with Bill Laswell, collaborated with Dave Stewart, and even invited Flea to play on *Wandering Spirit*. Perhaps Jagger, without Keith Richards in the role of hellhound on his trail, is freed from his audience's expectation of how a Rolling Stones album should sound. Or maybe Richards just wouldn't put up with such nonsense.

Unlike Jagger's past solo efforts, however, *Goddess* works precisely because of the modern musical touches Keith might dismiss as bollocks, from the pulsing electronic rhythms of "Gun" to the Caribbean flair of the Wyclef Jean-produced "Hide Away." On "Joy" and the title track, Jagger and Matt Clifford (one of several producers) update the decadent dance rhythms the Stones experimented with in the late seventies and then abandoned to go back to blues rock. Even if it's not quite the departure it was rumored to be—Jagger's planned collaboration with Missy Elliott didn't make the album—*Goddess* is the only forward-looking project by a Rolling Stone since the band flirted with disco on "Miss You."

The tracks that remain rooted in rock also make a case for Jagger as a solo artist as opposed to merely a front man between megatours. "God Gave Me Everything," a duet with Lenny Kravitz, is about a horny old rocker who finally realizes that he really can always get what he wants but isn't afraid to share, and



ALWAYS A GODDESS: On his new solo album, Jagger is in his element—and several others as well.

the country-flavored "Too Far Gone" reveals a glimpse of Jagger "lost in starry dreams / And now watch my children / Just downloading them to screens." He knows pop culture is passing him by. But for the first time in a while, he's not content to simply stand there and ogle.

While Jagger searched the globe for fresh sounds—writing in the south of France, recording in the Caribbean, composing with Kravitz in Miami—his peer Paul McCartney simply stepped into a studio with a band he had never met before. At the very least, *Driving Rain* proves that inspiration can be found closer to home. McCartney has never

been the most ambitious Beatle—no primal-scream therapy for him, thanks so much—and recently, his simplest work has been his best. His classical "Liverpool Oratorio" project didn't exactly make Beethoven roll over, but on *Run Devil*

Run, his 1999 album of stripped-down early-rock covers, he reconnected with the music he grew up on. And while "From a Lover to a Friend" is sappy even by the standards of some of his silly love songs, much of *Driving Rain* has that same loose-limbed energy.

GARTH BROOKS DROVE country music's pickup-truck populism off the back roads and into the suburbs, replacing the genre's traditional specificity of place with an information-age emotional sprawl. Now, four years after the Central Park appearance that put him in front of so many city folks and two years after the "Chris Gaines" rock project that confused every single last one of them, the Cat in the Hat is back with *Scarecrow*, which he says will be his final album. (Having broken just about every sales record, Brooks now seems bent on

selling more albums than the Beatles and milking his announced retirement more than the Who.)

Scarecrow is restrained by Brooks's standards, which means it's closer to the seventies AM of James Taylor than Bob Seger. As always, Brooks crosses boundaries: "Mr. Midnight" is a power ballad for a lost highway, and the closest thing to a purist move is "Beer Run," a good-times anthem with a guest vocal from George Jones and an attitude that could have been borrowed from George Thorogood. The one song here that could sum up Brooks's entire career is "Squeeze Me In," on which he and Trisha Yearwood trade verses about not spending enough quality time together. "I've been faxing you love notes all day long," Yearwood pouts, a coal-miner's daughter lost in Larchmont, "but you don't ever fax me back." Couldn't she just page him? ■

Robert Levine's reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archive/levine.

Mick Jagger <i>Goddess in the Doorway</i> (Virgin)
Paul McCartney <i>Driving Rain</i> (Capitol)
Garth Brooks <i>Scarecrow</i> (Capitol)

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Hit on Third

Shoppers, take note: Matthew Kenney's Commissary, with its buoyant crowd and big-deal menu, is bringing bounce back to the Bloomingdale's district.

AM I THE ONLY ONE BUMMED out by the closing of the Baronet and Coronet Theaters at Third Avenue and 59th Street? I'm sure those who find ascending the steep escalators of a twelve-floor multiplex its own form of moviegoing climax have no idea what I'm talking about. But back when New Yorkers regarded movie theaters as classy singular sensations, settling into the deep white leatherette seats of the Baronet or the Coronet seemed the only urbane cinematic choice. Plus there was an added bonus: Both theaters let you out smack in the middle of New York's coolest shop-and-schmooze district. There was nowhere you'd rather be seen swinging a few shopping bags and a Bloody Mary-soaked celery stalk than the blocks of Third Avenue in the shadow of Bloomingdale's. Pastis on its Thursday best couldn't muster the air-kiss count during a slow Saturday at Yellowfingers.

These days, driving past the shuttered theaters across from the perpetual hole that was Alexander's is enough to make me miss disco, or at least the original Fiorucci.

But wait. What's that I spy through that vast circular picture window on the corner at 61st Street? Look at all that activity—the hugging, flitting, and flirting. All those tables of blondes. And do I see . . . yes, shopping bags! Could it be that **Commissary** has captured time in a bottle?

Odd that a room stripped as bare as the stage of a Beckett play—lacquered greige tabletops, sparse art on the off-white walls—sparks with raucous energy. An industrial constellation of a chandelier hovers over the white-topped circular bar. The interior is so neutral it could be rented out as temporary showroom. And yet, not only is its recessed lighting astonishingly flattering but the squareness of the room—cut by the sweeping arc of the bar—affords an unexpected intimacy.

But the most delightful source of invigoration at Commissary comes from chef-



THEATER IN THE ROUND: The bar at Commissary.

owner Matthew Kenney's wonderfully appealing food. Kenney's appearance in the mid-nineties won him new-chef awards and prompted him to beget new boîtes with Starbuckian speed: Matthew's, Commune, Canteen, Mezze, Monzu. And somehow he always seemed to be in the kitchen of whatever restaurant you *weren't* in. All the menus read fine, and some rooms had a certain distinction, but the deft flavors originally generated by Kenney's skill with Mediterranean spices, grains, and roots grew diffuse

or were replaced by macaroni and cheese.

But Kenney's handsome visage and culinary gifts are readily in evidence here. There is nothing perfunctory about those dense flashes of black truffle breaking through the smoky richness of Jerusalem artichoke-and-braised rabbit soup. Sweet diver scallops are embraced by the salty swagger of pancetta and sautéed porcini. An uncomplicated salad of arugula and manchego shimmers in its piquant quince dressing. Goat-cheese-and-mission-fig piz-

za cannily avoids being cloying by the earthy addition of marjoram. Though crab cakes are meaty, they don't rate the adjective "spiced" yet, and a pleasant squash-and-cabbage risotto needs an element with heft. But order a double portion of superb hazelnut-crusted foie gras with fennel and currants and say to hell with the entrées.

Of course, that would mean missing grilled lobster in coconut milk and a wonderful goat cheese-filled, mint-flecked lamb loin. I could eat several tureenfuls of the braised duck, but why be foolish and ignore the accompanying grilled breast with caramelized carrots? Kenney's pistachio-and-anise-crusted halibut never obscures the fish's silky texture. Roasted cod has a brisk glaze of vinegar and Riesling; thin, tender venison chops are paired with an

engaging juniper-and-celery-root gratin. Roast chicken with lemon and sage might be equally satisfying with a more solid partner than the organic polenta.

Only one dessert—a pumpkin-meringue tart at war with itself—misfires. But zesty mutsu apple crisp with caramelized fennel, the chocolate-soufflé cake, a gorgeous pear in mint syrup, and an orange nut cake with gianduja mousse are clean, clear shots. You don't need to know what I think of tapioca, even with vanilla, coconut, and anise. But that's a Jewish thing.

Commissary has recharged the sassy fun this part of town once radiated. You may be too late for the Coronet, but come see what you missed. ■

Commissary
1030 Third Avenue, at 61st
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Previous weeks' restaurant reviews can be read online at www.nymetro.com/archive/restaurants.

This Week's Releases

As I Was Moving Ahead Occasionally I Saw Brief Glimpses of Beauty

A 30-year film diary of New York director Jonas Mekas, founder of Anthology Film Archives. (4 hrs. 48 mins.; NR) • Opens 12/12.

Iris

Judi Dench is Iris Murdoch, the English author who becomes afflicted with Alzheimer's, in Richard Eyre's film. Kate Winslet plays Murdoch in flashbacks to her Oxford years. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) • Opens 12/14.

Kandahar

Iranian writer-director Mohsen Makhmalbaf's film is about a woman (Nelofer Pazira) who must bypass the Taliban to rescue a suicidal sister in Afghanistan. In Farsi, with English subtitles. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) • Opens 12/14.

Lantana

Anthony LaPaglia plays a Sydney police detective whose search for a missing psychiatrist intersects four unhappily married couples. Directed by Ray Lawrence (*Bliss*) film; based on Andrew Bovell's play *Speaking in Tongues*. With Geoffrey Rush, Barbara Hershey. (2 hrs.; R) • Opens 12/14.

Not Another Teen Movie

Director Joel Gallen's film debut spoofs the past fifteen years of the teen-movie genre, from *The Breakfast Club* to *American Pie*. With Jaime Pressly. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) • Opens 12/14.

Piñero

Benjamin Bratt plays outlaw poet Miguel Piñero in this film by Leon Ichaso (*Sugar Hill*) about his rise and fall. With Giancarlo Esposito, Rita Moreno. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) • Opens 12/13.

The Royal Tenenbaums

Gene Hackman and Anjelica Huston play Royal and

New Films

A.I.

Alternately emotionally wrenching and unsatisfying, it's one of the oddest movies in some time: not so much a dark *E.T.* as a manic-depressive *E.T.* (Rainer; 7/9/01) (2 hrs. 20 mins.; PG-13) • 17.

ABCD

Writer-director Krutin Patel's film centers on an Indian family—a traditionalist widower, a rebellious daughter, and a thoughtful son—readjusting to life after a move to New York. (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) • 6; 22; 63.

The Affair of the Necklace

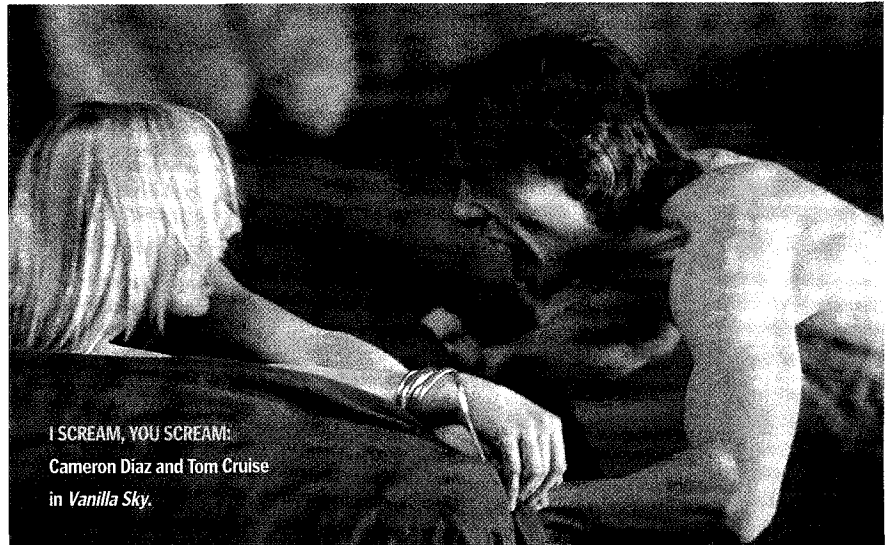
Hilary Swank stars in this overstuffed, creaky historical epic set in pre-Revolutionary France. She plays the real-life Jeanne de la Motte-Valois, whose machinations to restore her family name reportedly helped bring down the aristocracy and usher in the Revolution. Swank is lovely but monochromatic, and the rest of the cast, including Jonathan Pryce, Joely Richardson, Christopher Walken, and Brian Cox, is upstaged by the period décor. (Rainer; 12/3) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) • 1; 13; 14; 27; 42; 53; 63.

★ Amélie

Jean-Pierre Jeunet's frenetic frolic is about a 23-year-

Ground Rules

These synopses, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer. Stars (★) denote releases that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element. **NOTE: Each review is followed by numbers indicating theaters where the film is playing; a key to theaters begins on page 76.**



I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM:
Cameron Diaz and Tom Cruise
in *Vanilla Sky*.

Mrs. Tenenbaum, the parents of a very dysfunctional New York family. Ben Stiller, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Bill Murray also star; Wes Anderson (*Rushmore*) directs. (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) • Opens 12/14.

Second Skin

Spanish director Gerardo Vera's film stars Javier Bardem (*Before Night Falls*) as a surgeon who becomes involved with a married man (Jordi Mollá). In Spanish, with English subtitles. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • Opens 12/14.

Vanilla Sky

Tom Cruise stars in Cameron Crowe's film about a New York playboy whose brush with death makes him reevaluate his life. With Cameron Diaz and Penélope Cruz. (2 hrs. 16 mins.; R) • Opens 12/14.

old Parisian waitress, played by Audrey Tautou, who sees herself as the rescuer of sad souls, and as a Zorro-like avenger, too. Jeunet's technique is antic enough to please Chuck Jones, but he doesn't quite have the simplicity of soul to make this film's happily-ever-after conceit sing. Still, treacle this elaborately inventive deserves some kind of blue ribbon. Matthieu Kassovitz co-stars. (Rainer; 11/12) (2 hrs.; R) • 1; 24; 46; 49; 63.

B-52

German documentarian Hartmut Bitomsky traces the 50-year history of the military's workhorse plane. (1 hr. 48 mins.; NR) • 4.

★ Baran

Majid Majidi has made a marvelously felt movie about an Iranian construction laborer (Hossein Abedini) who develops an unspoken ardor for an Afghan girl posing as a boy in order to support her family. Mijidi has a great eye for composition, and yet the suffering in this movie never seems picturesque. (Rainer; 12/10) (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) • 37.

Behind Enemy Lines

Director John Moore's debut stars Gene Hackman as a wounded Air Force commander who aborts a mission in Bosnia to save his captured young charge (Owen Wilson). (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) • 2; 8; 9; 14; 26; 28; 34; 35; 40; 41; 43; 44; 45; 48; 50; 52; 53; 55; 57; 58; 60; 61; 62; 64; 69; 71; 72; 73; 75.

Black Knight

Martin Lawrence is a miniature-golf employee miraculously transported to the Middle Ages. With Tom Wilkinson; directed by Gil Junger (*10 Things I Hate About You*). (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG-13) • 7; 14; 25; 39; 40; 43; 44; 45; 48; 50; 52; 53; 54; 55; 57; 60; 62; 66; 69; 71; 72; 73; 75.

★ The Business of Strangers

The movie, written and directed by Patrick Stettner, looks like it's a product of the Neil La Bute Finishing School, but Stockard Channing, as a CEO confronting a pathological assistant (Julia Stiles) in an airport-hotel stayover, has one of her few strong movie roles here, and she plays it to the hilt. (Rainer; 12/17) (1 hr. 23 mins.; R) • 1; 37.

★ The Devil's Backbone

The new horror film from the extravagantly talented Mexican director Guillermo Del Toro isn't quite as lushly amazing as his *Cronos* or *Mimic*, but it's still creepy. Set in an orphanage in the waning days of the Spanish Civil War, it somehow blends agitprop Marxism with ghoulishness without seeming silly. Federico Luppi and Marisa Paredes, from Almodóvar's *All About My Mother*, star. (Rainer; 11/26) (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) • 1; 10; 14; 27; 37.

Domestic Disturbance

John Travolta plays a divorcé whose 11-year-old becomes Vince Vaughn's charge. Directed by Harold Becker (*Sea of Love*). (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG-13) • 13; 21; 43; 45; 50; 52; 56; 59; 60; 67.

The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition

George Butler's documentary is about Sir Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic rescue mission in 1914. Narrated by Liam Neeson. (1 hr. 33 mins.; NR) • 2.

★ Fat Girl

Catherine Breillat's touching, minor movie about two sisters on a summer vacation has many observant moments. Anaïs and her considerably prettier 15-year-old sister, Elena, play out the pettiness and sympathies of siblinghood. (Rainer; 10/22) (1 hr. 23 mins.; NR) • 90.

Final

Denis Leary may awaken in an insane asylum in *Big Night* co-director Campbell Scott's film. But the question is—is he mad? With Hope Davis. (1 hr. 51 mins.; NR) • 15; 90.

The Fluffer

Gay-porn director Wash West wrote and co-directed (with Richard Glatzer) this story of a romantic triangle on an adult-film set. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) • 6.

Focus

William H. Macy and Laura Dern star in a case of mistaken identity set in New York during World War II. Director Neal Slavin's debut; from the Arthur Miller novel. (1 hr. 40 mins.; PG-13) • 8; 65.

Happennance

Director Laurent Firode's debut film stars Audrey

Tautou and is an ensemble comedy about a series of significantly random interactions; in French with English subtitles. (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) • 3.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Chris Columbus's literal-minded, scrupulously faithful rendition of J. K. Rowling's beloved children's best-seller lacks transcendence. As Harry, the fabulous boy wizard at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Daniel Radcliffe looks the part but is pinched and inexpressive; better is the rust-haired Rupert Grint as his cohort Ron Weasley, and Maggie Smith and Richard Harris as Hogwarts professors. (Rainer; 11/19) (2 hrs. 22 mins.; PG) • 7; 9; 12; 13; 20; 29; 31; 36; 39; 40; 41; 42; 43; 44; 45; 47; 48; 49; 50; 51; 52; 53; 55; 56; 57; 58; 60; 61; 62; 64; 66; 70; 71; 72; 73; 74; 75.

Heist

David Mamet wrote and directed this spottily entertaining wheeze about a veteran thief (Gene Hackman) who pulls off one last job. Mamet is in love with conmanship, but there may be one too many grifts going on here. Ultimately, Mamet may have conned himself. Delroy Lindo and Danny DeVito also star. (Rainer; 11/12) (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) • 5; 9; 12; 13; 14; 25; 27; 38; 53; 59; 60; 65; 67.

In July

A Hamburg physics teacher pursues a mysterious Turkish woman from Germany to Istanbul in writer-director Fatih Akin's fantastical romance film. In German, with English subtitles. (1 hr. 40 mins.; NR) • 6; 46.

★ In the Bedroom

Todd Field, in his directorial debut, has made a fine, straightforward film, based on an Andre Dubus short story, "Killings," about a murdered son and the parents who slowly writhe for retribution. As the parents, Tom Wilkinson and Sissy Spacek are extraordinary, and the rest of the cast, which includes Marisa Tomei, Nick Stahl, and William Mapother, are well served by Field's principled indulgence. It's an intelligent thriller about what we are capable of in the name of hatred and of love. (Rainer; 11/26) (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) • 1; 37.

The Independent

Stephen Kessler (*National Lampoon's Vegas Vacation*) co-wrote and directed this mockumentary about Morty Fineman, a prolific Hollywood B-movie director played by Jerry Stiller. With Janeane Garofalo and Max Perlich. (1 hr. 24 mins.; R) • 7.

Jung (War) in the Land of the Mujaheddin

This documentary focuses on Gino Strada, a Roman surgeon attempting to open a relief hospital in northern Afghanistan. A timely film about the horrors of war. (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) • 3.

K-Pax

Kevin Spacey is a mental patient who thinks he's from another planet, and Jeff Bridges is the psychiatrist he bonds with. Unintentionally silly in that uplifting way that Hollywood is prone to. (Rainer; 10/29) (1 hr. 33 mins.; PG-13) • 7.

★ La Ciénega

This first feature from the Argentinian Lucretia Martel is a waywardly artful extended-family drama set in a rundown country estate where the constant rains have turned everything swampy. It's vignette-thin, but Martel's sensibility, lush yet wry, is something new. (Rainer; 10/15) (1 hr. 43 mins.; NR) • 90.

Life as a House

Kevin Kline plays a divorced architect who moves to the country in Irwin Winkler's (*Guilty by Suspicion*) film. (2 hrs. 4 mins.; R) • 8; 9; 14; 15; 25; 42; 59; 65.

The Man Who Wasn't There

The movie isn't there, either. The Coen brothers have a strong feeling for the sleek surfaces of film noir, but this pulp-art thing, set in northern California in 1949, is a hollow experience. Billy Bob Thornton plays a near-catatonic barber who becomes ensnared in murder; the supporting cast, including Frances McDormand, James Gandolfini, and especially Tony Shalhoub, have more of a pulse. (Rainer; 11/5) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) • 5; 9; 13; 14; 23; 30; 42; 46; 63; 75.

★ Monsters, Inc.

This latest computer animation from Pixar via Disney

is an amusing kid-oriented spree featuring fuzzy-wuzzy monsters and thingies. No *Shrek*, but enjoyable family entertainment. (Rainer; 11/12) (1 hr. 33 mins.; G) • 7; 9; 12; 13; 15; 20; 25; 36; 38; 39; 40; 41; 43; 44; 45; 49; 50; 51; 52; 53; 56; 57; 58; 59; 60; 62; 64; 66; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75.

Mulholland Drive

Naomi Watts and Laura Elena Harring play an ingenue and an amnesiac shady lady making their way through a noirish L.A. dreamscape in David Lynch's latest weirdo fantasia. It has its moments, but too much of it is moribund and a retreat of what he's already done to death. (Rainer; 10/22) (2 hrs. 26 mins.; R) • 10; 18.

Mysteries of Egypt

Omar Sharif leads a tour of Egypt in Bruce Neibaur's IMAX film. (46 mins.; NR) • 89.

No Man's Land

Three soldiers, two Bosnians and a Serb, are stuck between enemy lines during the Bosnian war in writer-director Danis Tanovic's absurdist debut feature film. (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) • 1; 37.

Novocaine

Writer David Atkins's directorial debut stars Steve Martin as an unraveling dentist. With Elias Koteas, Lau-

jandro Amenabar. (2 hrs. 25 mins.; PG-13) • 2; 14; 16.

Out Cold

A slacker attempts to make good by opening his own snowboarding park at a posh Colorado mountain resort. Directorial debut of Emmett and Brendan Malloy. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG-13) • 14; 67; 75.

Porn Star: The Legend of Ron Jeremy

Affectionately known in the adult-film biz as the "Hedgehog," Ron Jeremy is the all-too-willing subject of this unrated documentary, which contains no hardcore scenes, but probably could have used a few. Dullness sets in early as we learn of Jeremy's quest to be cast in mainstream Hollywood movies. (Rainer; 12/3) (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) • 3.

Princesa

A downtrodden Brazilian call girl heads to Milan for a sex change, and ends up falling in love with a married businessman instead. Directed by Henrique Goldman; in Portuguese and Italian with English subtitles. (1 hr. 36 mins.; NR) • 6.

Punks

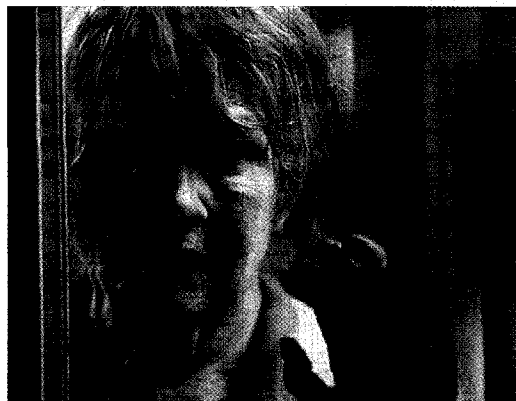
Ian Polk's debut film is a romantic comedy about gay African-American men. (1 hr. 44 mins.; NR) • 6; 22.

Opening

The Camera's Iris

"I was totally conscious from the word go not to make this film sentimental," says Richard Eyre, the former director of Britain's Royal National Theatre and the writer-director of *Iris*, the screen biography of famed English author Iris Murdoch that depicts her descent into Alzheimer's disease. "In the end, it's a 40-year love story, with the illness as a metaphor for what love can surmount." *Iris* shows the beginning and the end of her marriage to John Bayley, the somewhat straight man to Iris's idiosyncratic lead, and from whose autobiography the screenplay was adapted. Iris

is played in her youth by Kate Winslet and in her dotage by Judi Dench (pictured). "When John saw the film, he said it was like watching *King Lear*," says Eyre, whose *The Crucible* with Liam Neeson and Laura Linney opens on Broadway this February. "But I think what he liked most was Kate." Opens December 14. (See Peter Rainer's review, page 60, and "This Week's Releases.")



Serendipity

John Cusack and Kate Beckinsale are the star-crossed lovers in this airless romantic comedy that owes more than a bit to *Sleepless in Seattle*. (Rainer; 10/15) (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG-13) • 14; 59.

Shallow Hal

The new Farrelly brothers bad-taste comedy stars Jack Black as a randy jerk and Gwyneth Paltrow as the porcine do-gooder he is hypnotized into seeing as a babe. Some good gross-out invention, but too heartfelt by half. Do we really need the Farrellys to champion inner beauty? (Rainer; 11/19) (1 hr. 54 mins.; PG-13) • 7; 9; 14; 28; 33; 43; 45; 50; 53; 57; 58; 60; 62; 70; 71; 72; 73; 75.

Sidewalks of New York

As usual, Edward Burns writes, stars, and directs, this time in a romantic comedy with an ensemble cast: Stanley Tucci and Heather Graham are couple No. 1; David Krumholtz and Brittany Murphy are couple No. 2; Rosario Dawson and Burns bring up the rear. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 5; 8; 11; 14; 27; 32; 42; 49; 63; 67.

Spy Game

Robert Redford is a CIA agent counting the minutes until his retirement—and then his protégé (Brad Pitt) is wrongly imprisoned overseas, accused of being a spy. Directed by Tony Scott (*Enemy of the State*). (1 hr. 55 mins.; R) • 5; 11; 12; 13; 14; 23; 31; 35; 42; 43; 44; 45; 47; 50; 52; 53; 55; 57; 58; 60; 62; 64; 68; 70; 72; 73; 74; 75.

★ Tape

Richard Linklater's movie of Stephen Belber's play is set entirely in a dingy motel room and stars Ethan Hawke and Robert Sean Leonard as high-school friends who reunite after ten years, and Uma Thurman

ra Dern, and Helena Bonham Carter. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) • 2; 14; 27; 42.

★ Ocean's Eleven

Steven Soderbergh shoots the works in this snazzy, somewhat chilly stars-on-parade heist movie set in Vegas and based, ever so loosely, on the 1960 Rat Pack version. George Clooney and Julia Roberts co-star along with Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Andy Garcia, Elliott Gould, Carl Reiner, Don Cheadle, and Bernie Mac. The star wattage is high, but Soderbergh's direction is the real show here: He seems to be shooting everybody from every possible angle. It's an eye-in-the-sky tour de force. (Rainer; 12/10) (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) • 5; 11; 12; 13; 14; 19; 31; 33; 38; 39; 43; 44; 45; 49; 50; 51; 52; 53; 54; 55; 57; 58; 60; 61; 62; 64; 70; 71; 72; 73; 74; 75.

The One

Jet Li plays both the hero and the villain in James Wong's (*Final Destination*) interplanetary sci-fi adventure. (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG-13) • 7; 20; 39; 43; 44; 45; 50; 52; 56; 67; 69; 75.

The Others

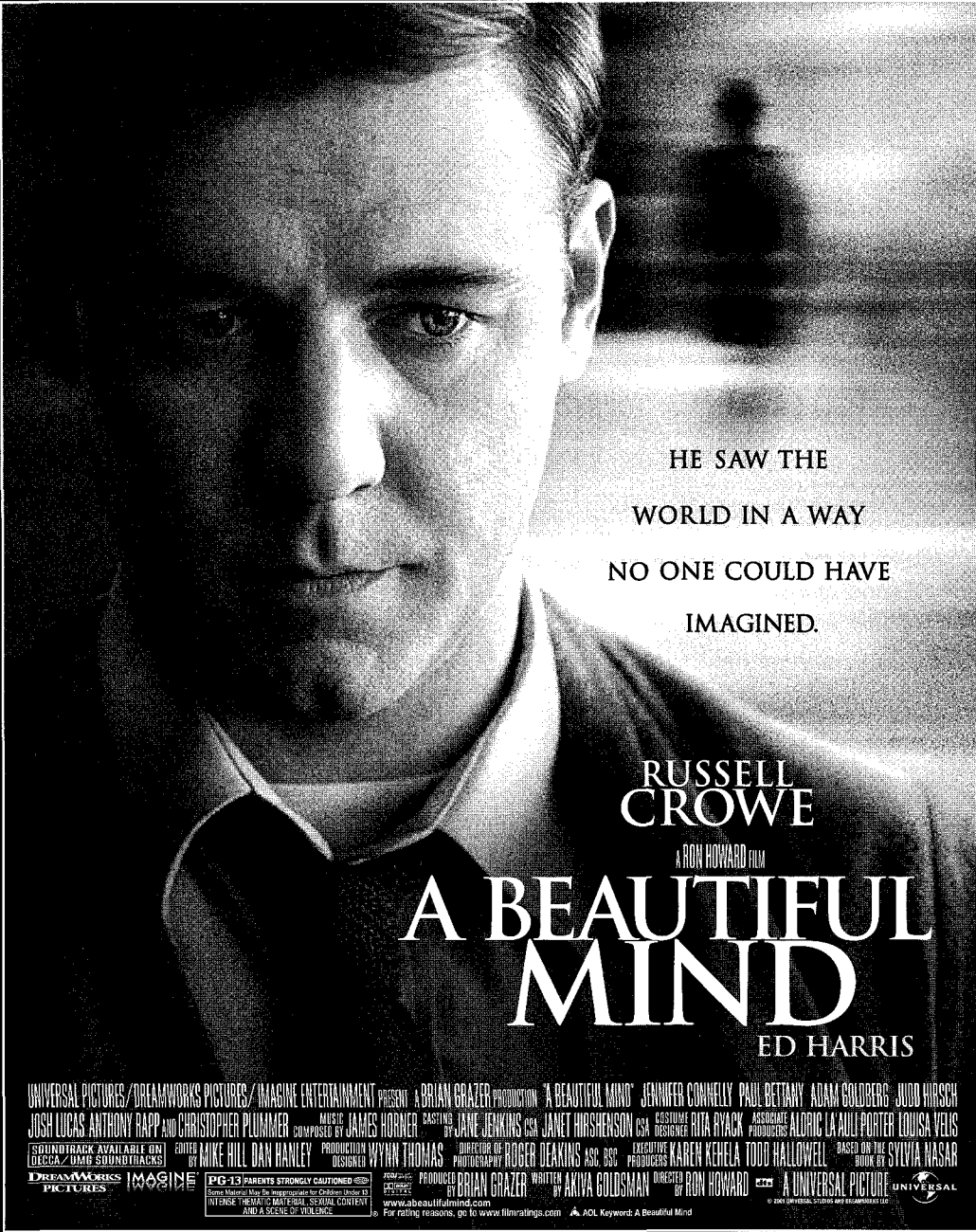
Nicole Kidman plays a mother raising her two children in a haunted house while her husband is serving in World War II. American debut of Spanish director Ale-

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as the ex-girlfriend who may have been date-raped by one of them senior year. It's an amazingly fluid and hypercharged experience, extremely well acted. (Rainer; 11/5) (1 hr. 28 mins.; R) • 2.

13 Ghosts

Shannon Elizabeth, Matthew Lillard, and F. Murray Abraham star in Steve Beck's remake of William Castle's 1960 film. (1 hr. 37 mins.; PG-13) • 22; 67; 75.

★ Training Day

Denzel Washington plays a corrupt L.A. narcotics detective and Ethan Hawke plays his rookie sidekick in this dawn-to-dawn melodrama with higher pretensions. Both performers are crackjack and the film, directed by Antoine Fuqua and written by David Ayer, is a visceral high, but, in dramatic-political terms, it's something of a cop-out. (Rainer; 10/15) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) • 20.

★ Waking Life

Richard Linklater has made a one-of-a-kind movie. A live-action digital-video movie was "painted over" by scores of computer animators, and the result has an amazing fluidity. The film is about a young man who passes through a linked series of encounters that may or may be dreams. Most of the people in the film mouth extended arias about the nature of reality, but the results are anything but a snore. One of the very best movies of the year. (Rainer; 10/29) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) • 7; 27; 67.

The Wash

Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre play a hip-hop Odd Couple working in a car wash in L.A. Directed by D.J. Pooh. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R) • 22; 39; 43; 52.

You Are Here

New York writer-director Jeff Winner's debut is about Moe, a directionless 30-year-old painter who lives, and sometimes works, in the East Village. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) • 90.

Zoolander

Failed silliness. Ben Stiller co-wrote, directs, and stars as a male-bimbo fashion model who decides there's more to life than looking beautiful. Owen Wilson, Will Ferrell, and Jerry Stiller, in a funny cameo, co-star. (Rainer; 10/8) (1 hr. 34 mins.; PG-13) • 30.

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

1. CC Angelika Film Center

18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) • The Affair of the Necklace; Amélie; The Business of Strangers; The Devil's Backbone; In the Bedroom; No Man's Land

2. CC Village East

189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) • Behind Enemy Lines; The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition; Moulin Rouge; Novocaine; The Others; Tape

3. Cinema Village

22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) • Happenstance; Jung (War) in the Land of the Mujaheddin; Porn Star: The Legend of Ron Jeremy

4. Film Forum

209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) • B-52; Trembling Before G-d (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

5. Loews Village

66 Third Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#952) • Heist; The Man Who Wasn't There; Ocean's Eleven; Sidewalks of New York; Spy Game

6. Quad Cinema

34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) • ABCD; The Fluffer; In July; Princessa; Punks

7. UA Union Square

13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) • Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; The Independent; K-Pax; Monsters, Inc.; The One; Shallow Hal; Waking Life

14th-41st Streets

8. CC Murray Hill Cinemas

160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) • Behind Enemy Lines; Focus; Life as a House; Sidewalks of New York

9. Clearview's Chelsea

260 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#597) • Behind Enemy Lines; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Heist; Life as a House; The Man Who Wasn't There; Monsters, Inc.; Shallow Hal

10. Clearview's Chelsea West

333 W. 23rd St. (212-777-FILM#614) • The Devil's Backbone; Mulholland Drive

11. Loews 19th St. East

890 Broadway, at 19th St. (212-50-LOEWS#858) • Ocean's Eleven; Sidewalks of New York; Spy Game

12. Loews 34th St. Theatre

312 W. 34th St. (212-244-8850) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Heist; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Spy Game

13. Loews Kips Bay Theatre

570 Second Ave. (212-505-6397#558) • The Affair of the Necklace; Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Heist; The Man Who Wasn't There; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Spy Game

42nd-60th Streets

14. AMC Empire 25 Theatres

234 W. 42nd St. (212-398-3939) • The Affair of the Necklace; Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Bridget Jones's Diary; The Devil's Backbone; Heist; Life as a House; The Man Who Wasn't There; Moulin Rouge; Novocaine; Ocean's Eleven; The Others; Out Cold; Serendipity; Shallow Hal; Shrek; Sidewalks of New York; Spy Game

15. CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3

1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) • Final; Life



stocked the fridge, packed the kids' lunches. I'm a method director—I'd get rid of the camera if I could." (He seems nearly to have succeeded: Lawrence hasn't directed a film since he made *Bliss* in 1985.) *Lantana*, starring Anthony LaPaglia and Geoffrey Rush (pictured), culminates an eight-year collaboration with playwright Andrew Bovell, whose original version of the story, called *Speaking in Tongues*, is currently playing onstage at the Gramercy Theatre (see listing, page 82). "Ray saw the play five times when we opened in Sydney," says Bovell, best known as a screenwriter of *Strictly Ballroom*. "We both respond to relationships in discord." Lawrence agrees: "Life is conflict, and when it isn't, you're dead." Opens December 14. (See "This Week's Releases.")

As a House; Monsters, Inc.

16. CC Eastside Playhouse

919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) • The Others

17. CC Sutton

205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) • A.I.

18. Clearview's 59th Street East

239 E. 59th St. (212-777-FILM#615) • Mulholland Drive

19. Clearview's Ziegfeld

141 W. 54th St. (212-777-FILM#602) • Ocean's Eleven

20. Loews 42nd Street E Walk

42nd St. at Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#572) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; The One; Training Day

21. Loews Astor Plaza

44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (212-50-LOEWS#699) • Domestic Disturbance

22. Loews State

1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#901) • ABCD; Punks; 13 Ghosts; The Wash

23. New York Twin

220 E. 59th St. (212-505-CINE#590) • The Man Who Wasn't There; Spy Game

24. Paris Theatre

4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) • Amélie

61st Street and Above, East Side

25. CC 86th St. East

210 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#763) • Black Knight; Heist; Life as a House; Monsters, Inc.

26. Clearview's Beekman

1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (212-777-FILM#606) • Behind Enemy Lines

27. Clearview's First & 62nd St.

400 E. 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#957) • The Affair of the Necklace; The Devil's Backbone; Heist; Novocaine; Sidewalks of New York; Waking Life

28. Clearview's Park and 86th St.

125 E. 86th St. (212-777-FILM#604) • Behind Enemy Lines; Shallow Hal

29. Loews 72nd St. East

1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#704) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

30. Loews New York Twin

1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (212-50-LOEWS#698) • The Man Who Wasn't There; Zoolander

31. Loews Orpheum 7

1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (212-50-LOEWS#964) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Ocean's Eleven; Spy Game

32. UA East

1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) • Sidewalks of New York

33. UA Gemini

1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) • Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal

Opening

Australian Rules

"There were no sets, no lights, and no makeup," says director Ray Lawrence of *Lantana*, his film about four eroding marriages and the attempts made by the couples to shore them up. "I wanted all emotional rawness, everything real; the actors

61st Street and Above, West Side

34. Clearview's 62nd and Broadway

1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (212-777-FILM#864) • Behind Enemy Lines

35. Clearview's Metro Cinema

2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (212-777-FILM#609) • Behind Enemy Lines; Spy Game

36. Clearview's Olympia

2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (212-777-FILM#613) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.

37. Lincoln Plaza Cinemas

30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) • Baran; The Business of Strangers; The Devil's Backbone; In the Bedroom; No Man's Land

38. Loews 84th Street

2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (212-50-LOEWS#701) • Heist; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven

39. Magic Johnson Harlem USA

300 W. 125th St. (212-665-8733) • Black Knight; Harry

Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; The Wash

40. New Coliseum

701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.

41. Nova

3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) • Behind Enemy Lines; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.

42. Sony Lincoln Square

1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-50-LOEWS#638) • The Affair of the Necklace; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Life As a House; The Man Who Wasn't There; Novocaine; Sidewalks of New York; Spy Game

Bronx

43. Bay Plaza

2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (718-777-FILM#833) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

44. Concourse Plaza

214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; Spy Game

45. Whitestone

2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

Brooklyn

46. BAM Rose Cinemas

30 Lafayette Ave. (718-623-2770) • Amélie; In July; The Man Who Wasn't There (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

47. Brooklyn Heights Pavilion

70 Henry St. (718-369-0838) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Spy Game

48. Canarsie

9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

49. Cobble Hill Cinema

265 Court St. (718-596-9113) • Amélie; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Sidewalks of New York

50. Court Street 12

106 Court St. (718-246-7469) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

51. Kent Triplex

Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven

52. Linden Boulevard Multiplex

Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; Spy Game; The Wash

53. Pavilion

188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) • The Affair of the Necklace; Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Heist; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

54. Pavilion Flatbush

314 Flatbush Ave. (718-596-7070) • Black Knight; Ocean's Eleven

55. Ridgewood

55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Ocean's Eleven; Spy Game

56. UA Marboro

6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) • Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; The One

57. UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay

3907 Shore Pkwy., off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

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Queens

58. Centre Sunnyside

42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) • Behind Enemy Lines; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

59. Cinemart

106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) • Domestic Disturbance; Heist; Life as a House; Monsters, Inc.; Serendipity

60. College Point Multiplex

28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Domestic Disturbance; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Heist; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

61. Jackson Triplex

82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) • Behind Enemy Lines; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Ocean's Eleven

62. Kaufman Astoria Cinema

38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

63. Kew Gardens Cinemas

81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) • ABCD; The Affair of the Necklace; Amélie; The Man Who Wasn't There; Sidewalks of New York

64. Main Street Cinemas

72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) • Behind Enemy Lines; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Spy Game

65. North Shore Towers

27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) • An American Rhapsody; Focus; Heist; Life as a House

66. Plaza

103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) • Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.

67. UA Astoria

28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) • Domestic Disturbance; Heist; The One; Out Cold; Sidewalks of New York; 13 Ghosts; Waking Life

Premiere

Loisaida Story

In late-sixties New York, Miguel Piñero led a gang of Puerto Rican poets on the Lower East Side. "The junkies shooting up in Tompkins Square would scream *¡Las poetas!* as we walked by," says Miguel Algarin, Piñero's original partner-in-rhyme. Those moments are reincarnated in writer-director Leon Ichaso's **Piñero**, which stars *Law & Order* alumnus Benjamin Bratt (pictured, right, with Giancarlo Esposito as Algarin) as the streetwise ex-con who took Broadway, then Hollywood, by storm. Ichaso, during a conversation at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe—the still-vital writers' center that Algarin opened with Piñero in 1974—says that Bratt "became Miguel totally. He was no longer an actor; he was the very man himself." Which meant contradictions, since Piñero was both rock star and hermit, a Tony-nominated playwright who wrote for *Kojak* and acted on *Miami Vice* but died a ruined addict. "I wanted to show this man as he was: a crazed poet who broke through conventions and ruled the Lower East Side with his words, yet was always a criminal." Filming was done in Spanish Harlem and the East Village, with the blessing and assistance of Piñero's old friend. "Algarin was just essential to our making this film," Ichaso says in an upstairs dressing room at the Nuyorican. "He even volunteered Mikey's ashes." Opens December 14. (See "This Week's Releases.")

B.K.

68. UA Brandon Cinema

70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) • Spy Game

69. UA Crossbay

94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; The One

70. UA Crossbay II

92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

71. UA Midway

108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal

72. UA Movieworld

242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

Staten Island

73. Atrium

680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Shallow Hal; Spy Game

74. UA Hylan Plaza

107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) • Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; Spy Game

75. UA Movies at Staten Island

141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) • Behind Enemy Lines; Black Knight; Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone; The Man Who Wasn't There; Monsters, Inc.; Ocean's Eleven; The One; Out Cold; Shallow Hal; Spy Game; 13 Ghosts



Museums, Societies, Etc.

76. American Museum of the Moving Image

36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077); \$8.50. • "Master Class: The Art of Film Editing." 12/15: *Reds* (1981). 12/16: *Lenny* (1974).

77. Anthology Film Archives

32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); \$8. • 12/13-12/18: *The Last Bolshevik* (1993); *One Day in the Life of Andrei Arsenevich* (1999); *The Sacrifice* (1985). "New Filmmakers." 12/12: *The Young Unknowns* (2001).

78. BAM Rose Cinemas

30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn (718-623-2770); \$9. • "Soviet Sixties: Twelve Masterpieces From the Russian New Wave." 12/11: *My First Teacher* (1963). 12/12: *The Letter That Was Never Sent* (1967). 12/13: *Goodbye, Boys* (1967).

79. Brooklyn Museum of Art

200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); \$6. • "Brooklyn Docs." 12/13: *Brother Born Again* (2001) (with Q&A with director Julia Pimsleur and producer Katy Chevigny).

80. Cinema Classics

332 E. 11th St. (212-677-5368); \$5. • 12/10: *Bringing Up Baby* (1938). 12/11-12/12: *Grapes of Wrath* (1940). 12/13-12/15: *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942). 12/16-12/17: *Notorious* (1946). 12/18: *Pickup on South Street* (1953).

81. Film Forum

209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); \$9. • "Greatest Hits: Highlights From Film Forum's Repertory Screen." 12/14-12/15: *The Birds* (1963); *Psycho* (1960). 12/16-12/17: *Juliet of the Spirits* (1965); *Nights of Cabiria* (1956). 12/18-12/19: *Brazil* (1985). "Jacques Demy." 12/11-12/13: *Bay of Angels* (1963).

82. Film Society of Lincoln Center

65 W. 65th St., plaza level (212-875-5600); \$9. • "Spanish Cinema Now." 12/11: *Madness of Love* (2001); *Buñuel and King Solomon's Table* (2001). "Discussion With Director Michael Moore." 12/11: *Roger and Me* (1989). 12/12: *Welcome, Mr. Marshall!* (1953); *Plácido* (1961). 12/13: *Plácido* (1961). 12/14: *No Shame* (2001); *Anita Takes a Chance* (2001). 12/15: *Madness of Love* (2001); *Strangers to Themselves* (2001); *Buñuel and King Solomon's Table* (2001); *Visionaries* (2001). 12/18: *Luna's Game* (2001).

83. French Institute

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6100); \$8. • "Cine Homage to Jeanne Moreau." 12/11: *Jules and Jim* (1962). 12/18: *The Bride Wore Black* (1968).

84. Guggenheim Museum

1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-423-3587); \$8. • "Brazil on Screen." 12/12: *The Two Faces of the Mountain* (1994); *Xica da Silva* (1976). 12/14: *Orfeu* (1999). 12/19: *A Dog's Will* (2000).

85. Makor

35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000); \$9. • 12/11-12/18: *Promises* (2001).

86. Museum of Modern Art

11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); free with \$10 admission, \$6.50 for students and seniors. • "A Wonderful Town: New York in Film." 12/18: *Auntie Mame* (1958); *Trick* (1999). "Documentary Fortnight." 12/11: *Atomic Ed and the Black Hole* (2001); *Cunnamulla* (2000); *Keep the River on Your Right: A Modern Cannibal Tale* (2001). 12/13: *Remote Sensing* (2001). 12/14: *Ralph Bunche: An American Odyssey* (2000); *The Fourth Dimension* (2001); *Heavy Metal Parking Lot: 15th Anniversary Tour* (2001). 12/15: *September 10th* (2001); *Navajo Boy* (1950s). 12/16: *Beneath the Veil* (2000); *My Journey My Islam* (1999); *A Thousand and One Voices: The Music of Islam* (2001).

87. Ocularis

70 N. 6th St., Brooklyn (718-388-8713); \$5. • "Videos From the Southern Front: Recent Works From Argentina." 12/17.

88. Scandinavia House

Victor Borge Hall, 58 Park Ave., nr. 38th St. (212-779-3587); \$8. • "Scandinavian Beauties." 12/12: *The Emigrants* (1970).

89. Sony IMAX Lincoln Square

1988 Broadway, at 68th St. (212-LOEWS#638); \$9.50. • *Across the Sea of Time*; *China: The Panda Adventure*; *Mysterries of Egypt*; *The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Adventure*.

90. Two Boots Pioneer Theater

155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300); \$9, \$6 for seniors. • "The Den of Injustice." 12/10: 1984 (1954). 12/11: *Hope & Glory* (1987). 12/17: *Dodes' Ka-den* (1970).

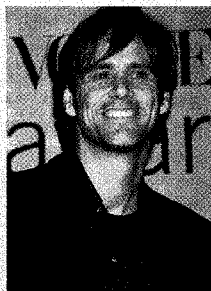
91. YWCA Cine-Club

610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); \$7. • "Homage to Ingmar Bergman." 12/15-12/16: *Persona* (1966).

railers

ME, MYSELF AND NICOLE Nicole Kidman

is in talks to team up with an unlikely co-star, **Jim Carrey**; the two would appear in an as-yet-untitled romantic comedy for Universal Pictures about a man haunted by the ghost of his dead wife; screenwriter-director **Gary Ross** (*Pleasantville*) will direct the film, which will be shot in New York and Los Angeles beginning in March.



G.I. CROWE? Since the public can't see to get enough of kitschy remakes, Revolution Studios and Imagine Entertainment are teaming up to develop a big-screen "dramatic version" of the sixties war sitcom *Hogan's Heroes*; **Russell Crowe** will star as Colonel Robert Hogan, who leads a group of soldiers as they engage in an elaborate espionage mission in a Nazi POW camp; Crowe will also produce the film; no director is yet attached.

BACK TO THE COUCH **Robert De Niro**, **Billy Crystal**, and **Lisa Kudrow** will be coming to the city in March to film *Analyze That*, Warner Bros.' sequel to the 1999 shrink-meets-mobster hit *Analyze This*; former *Ghostbuster* **Harold Ramis** returns as director on the film, which will follow the life of Paul Vitti (De Niro) once he's let out of prison and reteams with his former shrink (Crystal), who has run into some trouble of his own; De Niro's own Tribeca Films will produce.

HISTORY IN THE REMAKING Dante Entertainment is bringing an adaptation of author **Ray Bradbury's** classic science-fiction story "A Sound of Thunder" to the big screen; **Pierce Brosnan** will reportedly star as a wealthy man who travels back to prehistoric days to hunt dinosaurs, only to tragically alter life as



he (and we) know it; **Peter Hyams** (*End of Days*) will direct the film, Warner Brothers will distribute.

SARA CARDACE

KOLKER *Continued from page 34*

he'd attended a retirement seminar in Tampa, left a conference room to make a call, and come back to find his briefcase had been stolen. It turned up in a nearby hotel without his lighter and cigar cutter, but still with some classified documents that he shouldn't have taken from his office. O'Neill had reported it to the police and the Bureau right away. Under normal circumstances, this never would have been made public. But O'Neill thought he knew why it had.

"He thought the leak might have come from Washington," says Mawn. That same month, O'Neill told Mawn and others that Dick Clarke, the president's terrorism czar at the National Security Council, had asked O'Neill whether he wanted his name put forward to succeed him.

"It would be a powerful position," Mawn says. "That person would have direct contact with the FBI and turn around and influence top Cabinet people, and possibly even the president. So if I was somebody who didn't like him, it would be because he is getting into a position of power that could possibly get back to the Bureau to do things his way."

But it didn't matter. After Yemen, O'Neill had started seriously thinking about getting out. Part of that was financial pressure. "He was frustrated and angry," James says. "And he needed to make money."

The other part was the bed he'd made himself. Louis Freeh's No. 2, Tom Pickard, had told him point-blank that after the briefcase incident, there'd be little chance of his getting Mawn's job in New York—the only Bureau post he really wanted.

"I told him he had a tough row to hoe to get it," says Pickard, who retired at the end of November, and whom Jerry Hauer believes was the biggest roadblock in O'Neill's career. When it came to field-office-chief candidates, he said, "Janet Reno particularly insisted that there were no blemishes on that person's career. I think John shone best when there was a crisis. He'd put in phenomenal hours, he was completely dedicated, he wasn't distracted by anyone else. I don't know if he would have thrived on the day-to-day, 'What are we gonna do about the budget?' business. John was more of a take-charge, action guy."

ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, VALERIE AND John attended a wedding at the Plaza—a class reunion of old FBI men and cops. John was beaming the whole evening, and he and Valerie danced nearly every song. Valerie says that people turned to them and said, "God, if this is what retirement does . . ."

Three weeks later, there was another reunion—O'Neill's funeral. The service in Atlantic City—could it have been otherwise?—was brimming with ironies. The service demanded four-star security for Louis Freeh, Mary Jo White, and a host of FBI brass—an official place of honor given to a man who had just left the Bureau in frustration. It also featured Christine O'Neill as the widow. O'Neill's son and daughter rarely saw their father in his final years, while James's children, Jay and Stacy, were left wondering more about the man they called their father. Jay even called O'Neill "Dad" in a speech at the Elaine's wake a few days later, to the surprise of some people there.

His biological family got his memorial flags from the Bureau. Resentful about being overlooked, Stacy pinched two that the Bureau had sent to Elaine's. She's been asked to return them. She hasn't.

"I'M THE ONE WHO HAS TO REINVENT MYSELF now," Valerie James told me one afternoon recently, poking at a salad near her office in the fashion district. "My psychiatrist says I can't go on with my life if I keep talking about him, but I feel like I have to honor his memory."

She'd wanted to leave him in the fall of '99. He wasn't as much fun as he was in Chicago. The strain of the job, the embassy-bombing investigation, was getting to him. Her kids adored him, but it was not working for her, she told him. The late nights without her also had something to do with it. "He promised that when he left the FBI, he'd clean up his life," she said.

When I asked what that meant, she smiled. "Being a little straighter of a guy," she said.

The secret girlfriends aren't so secret anymore. James doesn't speak directly about them. Still, she doesn't have any illusions about the man she just lost. "John was all about his job," she said. "I don't know if John was a genius, but you look at smart people like Jack Kennedy, they don't necessarily lead Ward and June Cleaver lives. It doesn't necessarily mean they're bad people. I'll say this, though: Knowing everything I've learned since he died, I would do the last eleven years over again exactly as I did. And so would my kids. I know because I asked them."

Her John was different from everyone else's. "You see, to me, he wasn't the FBI," she said. "He was my lover and my friend." It's just that the end he met brought the many different lives he led crashing down, finally, together.

"It was a complicated death," she said, "for a complicated man."

Broadway

Now Playing

Aida

Disney's epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian prince, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. More important, the eye-popping sets and chichi costumes are designed by Bob Crowley. Maya Days, Idina Menzel, and Adam Pascal star. \$25-\$90. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).

Beauty and the Beast

The family-friendly musical adaptation of Disney's film is no *Lion King*, but it's still entertaining kids by the busload. \$25-\$85. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. • Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).

By Jeeves

A revival of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Alan Ayckbourn's musical about a wacky manservant and his banjo-plucking master. Music by Webber; book and lyrics by Ayckbourn, who also directs. \$75-\$85. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Cabaret

This gritty revival of the Kander and Ebb musical won four Tonys in 1998 for its portrayal of the decadent world of Weimar-era Berlin cabaret. Based on Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories*, the production has a much darker edge than the Liza Minnelli film. Now starring Gina Gershon and Raúl Esparza. Molly Ringwald replaces Gershon on 12/18. \$25-\$95. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. Opened: 3/19/98. • Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Chicago

This delightfully raunchy musical tribute to tough women and the men they murder won six Tonys in 1996. In this stylish production, choreographed by Ann Reinking and directed by Walter Bobbie, female inmates in a Jazz Age Chicago prison vie for the attention of a flashy lawyer and the tabloid press. \$20-\$90. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 11/14/96. • Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Contact

This sensational, Tony-blessed dance-theater work by John Weidman and Broadway's reigning choreographer, Susan Stroman, presents a triptych of inventive pieces, ranging from a naughty flirtation to a suicidal adman's frantic fantasy. Charlotte d'Amboise, Colleen Dunn, and D.W. Moffett now star. \$90. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Dance of Death

Ian McKellen and Helen Mirren play the feuding spouses in August Strindberg's classic drama. \$50-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

45 Seconds From Broadway

Neil Simon's new comedy, starring Lewis J. Stadlen, Marian Seldes, Louis Zorich, and Rebecca Schull, is an affectionate tribute to the Edison Hotel coffee shop, the legendary Broadway hangout otherwise known as the "Polish Tea Room." \$20-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).

42nd Street

Come and meet those dancin' feet. This revival of the Al Dubin and Harry Warren musical about the proverbial chorus girl who gets her big break is snappily directed by

Mark Bramble, with exuberant choreography by Randy Skinner, and features a top-notch cast: Michael Cumpsty, Christine Ebersole, David Elder, Jonathan Freeman, and Mary Testa. \$20-\$95. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).

The Full Monty

A rambunctious yet heartfelt musical adaptation of the 1997 film about desperate, destitute men who have nothing to lose but their underwear. Music and lyrics by David Yazbek; book by Terrence McNally; directed by Jack O'Brien. \$31-\$86. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. • Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Hedda Gabler

Kate Burton plays Hedda, a woman trapped in convention and bored with her scholarly husband, in this Jon Robin Baitz adaptation of Ibsen's classic, directed by Nicholas Martin. \$30-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/13. • Ambassador Theatre, 215 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).

Kiss Me, Kate

Burke Moses and Carolee Carmello interpret Cole Porter's delightfully feuding couple—two actors who play the *Shrew's* Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. An energetic supporting cast does terrifically with evergreen numbers like "Brush Up Your Shakespeare." \$26-\$86. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Les Misérables

An audacious button-pusher with over-the-top songs like "Do You Hear the People Sing?" and "I Dreamed a Dream," producer Cameron Mackintosh's mega-hit, based on the Victor Hugo novel, still stands as the best of the big British commercial imports. \$20-\$85. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 3/12/87. • Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

The Lion King

Based on the popular Disney movie, this sublimely inventive production showcases some of the best experimental theater techniques of a generation, wrought with joyful mastery by experimental director extraordinaire Julie Taymor, and rewarded with a bouquet of Tonys in 1998. \$30-\$95. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. • New Amsterdam Theatre, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).

Mamma Mia!

This season's feel-good hit is an unabashedly silly musical about a young bride-to-be and her single mom is scored with 22 shimmering disco tunes by Abba's Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus. Louise Pitre, Judy Kaye, Tina Maddigan, and Karen Mason star. Call for schedule. \$55-\$98.75. • Winter Garden Theatre, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-563-5544).

The Music Man

Meredith Willson's squeaky-clean 1957 musical about a con-man who charms the sleepy town of River City, Iowa, gets a giddily inventive production at the hands of director-choreographer Susan Stroman (*Contact*, *The Producers*). Robert Sean Leonard stars as Professor Harold Hill opposite the lovely, gorgeous-voiced Rebecca Luker. \$40-\$90. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (212-307-4100).

Noises Off

Patti Lupone, Peter Gallagher, Richard Easton, and Faith Prince star in this revival of Michael Frayn's London hit, a slapstick farce about a touring theatrical troupe. \$40-\$75. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).

The Phantom of the Opera

Andrew Lloyd Webber's campy version of the macabre tale, given an opulent spin by director Hal Prince.

Onstage

Child's Play

To hear the **52nd Street Project's** artistic director, Gus Rogerson, tell it, the most imaginative playwriting in New York is coming from the preteen set. Michael Velez's *A So-Called Family* is, Rogerson explains, "a Lewis Carroll kind of thing about a male zebra and a female zebra who both have siblings that they can't stand, so they abandon them and run into this monkey named Crazy." Johanna Vidal's *A Date for Mom* is "an extraordinarily well-plotted play about a girl who finds a date for her mom over the Internet, and then finds out that the guy is a homicidal maniac and captures the killer." *Crystal Hunt* by Victor Cortes is "an encounter between a dragon and a shape-shifting slime demon that is, in a way, a response to the violence of September 11." And Spencer Lopez's *Classroom Breakout* tracks a kid who wants to be a rock star, and happens to star Billy Crudup (pictured. In his other big role, in *Nerds Strike Back*). Founded two decades ago by playwright Willie Reale, who's since received a MacArthur "genius" grant, the 52nd Street Project has been giving at-risk kids the opportunity to write and act with some of the best actors and directors in the business. (In the past, performers like Edie Falco and Frances McDormand have lent their talents.) "We came together to use theater as a way of giving kids an experience of success," says Rogerson—and it certainly seems to be working. The Project's next slate of free performances, beginning on December 14, is already, so to speak, sold out, but check www.52project.org for volunteer information and future performance schedules.



L.H.

Car Talk

Susan O'Connor, who delivered fierce performances in *Never Swim Alone*, *See Bob Run*, and *Take* (for which she won Best Performance at the Fringe Festival), is now installed in *The Last Carburetor*, a new drama by Leon Chase at the Present Company. The young actress (pictured, with cast) plays a woman who thinks that her laid-off father's one true love—a wrecked 1970 Plymouth Barracuda (ooh!)—represents everything that is wrong and corrupt in the world. Through December 22. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")

\$20-\$85. Mon.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. • Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

The Producers

Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick produce the ultimate "surefire flop," *Springtime for Hitler*, in Mel Brooks's triumphant new musical and Tony Award record-setter. Based on his Oscar-winning 1968 film, directed and choreographed with aplomb by Susan Stroman, this giddy romp is the hottest ticket in town. \$30-\$100. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7:30. • St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).

Proof

Jennifer Jason Leigh plays a chronically depressed young woman whose father, a famous mathematician, recently lost his mind and then his life. When Catherine's type-A sister rolls into town to bury him, a graduate student (the exceptional Josh Hamilton) finds a groundbreaking proof among her father's otherwise nonsensical papers and Catherine is jolted out of her near-catatonic state and into the confusing world around her. Justly rewarded with a Pulitzer and several Tonys, David Auburn's *Proof* is a virtuoso piece of writing. Daniel Sullivan's direction is impeccable. \$24-\$69. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).

"QED"

Alan Alda stars in Peter Parnell's new two-character play about the odd physicist Richard Feynman. \$35-\$55. Sun. and Mon. at 8. • Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

Rent

The late Jonathan Larson's hauntingly scored, Pulitzer-winning reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as lived by a gaggle of East Village hipsters at the peak of grunge and the AIDS epidemic. \$35-\$80. Mon., Tues., Thurs. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).

The Rocky Horror Show

Just reopened: Christopher Ashley (Jeffrey) directs a surreal cast in Frank N. Furter's naughty pad for this fun stage version of the cult film about a Transylvanian transsexual and a kooky all-American couple. Throughout the performance, a celebrity emcee narrates laugh-out-loud improvisatory commentary (this fall's lineup includes Jerry Springer, Robin Leach, and Gilbert Gottfried), while the audience screams out call-and-response jokes. Featuring hairband legend Sebastian Bach (*Jekyll & Hyde*), *Rent* star Daphne Rubin-Vega, and Terrence Mann. \$30-\$85. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9:45, Sun. at 2 and 7. • Circle in the Square, 1633 Broadway (212-239-6200).

Sexaholix

John Leguizamo returns with his first solo Broadway show since getting his *Freak* on. Leguizamo—Toulouse-Lautrec in *Moulin Rouge*—promises to riff on sex and lecture audiences with his new skit "Latinos for Dummies: From Montezuma to Me." \$30-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Ground Rules

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and in temporary quarters at Bowling Green Park Plaza; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.



The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

In this shlicky Manhattan comedy by downtown "gender illusionist" and camp playwright Charles Busch, Tony Roberts and Valerie Harper play a hyper allergist and his frazzled self-improving wife, whose worlds are upended by the arrival of a globetrotting debutante (played by *Knots Landing* vet Michele Lee). \$30-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).

Thou Shalt Not

Reigning Broadway super-choreographer Susan Stroman (*Contact*, *The Music Man*, *The Producers*) teams up with Harry Connick Jr. on a new musical adaptation of Émile Zola's *Thérèse Raquin*, set in Connick's home town of New Orleans. Craig Bierko plays a jazz musician who returns from WWII and seduces a local married woman, played by Kate Levering. \$20-\$85. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 1/6. • Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).

Urinetown

A downtown hit, this weird musical, with book and lyrics by Greg Kotis and music and lyrics by Mark Hollman, is now a Broadway smash. The plot? In a corrupt city beset by a disaster of apocalyptic proportions, water is worth its weight in gold, and pedestrians are forced to comply with a pay-per-pee system. \$75-\$85. Mon.-Wed.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Henry Miller, 124 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

The Women

The Roundabout stages Clare Boothe Luce's 1936 classic about a woman whose marriage is ruined by gossip. The formidable ensemble includes Kristen Johnston, Rue McClanahan, Cynthia Nixon, Jennifer Tilly, and Mary Louise Wilson. \$40-\$70. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. • American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Good Thing

For the New Group, Jo Bonney directs a new drama

by Jessica Goldberg (*The Hologram Theory*, *Refuge*) that contrasts a young couple anticipating a baby and an older couple in the throes of a midlife crisis. \$25-\$35. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 12/16 opening. Through 1/13. • The New Group Theatre at St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).

Homebody/Kabul

In this prescient drama by Tony Kushner, the justly heralded author of *Angels in America*, a London woman becomes obsessed with Afghanistan, and her husband and daughter journey to the country after receiving a report that she has been murdered. Written several years before September 11, the drama features Dylan Baker and Linda Emond. \$50-\$60. Tues.-Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 1:30. In previews for a 12/19 opening. • New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-239-6200).

Summer of '42

A musical adaptation of the movie and 1971 Herman Raucher novel about three boys coming of age on a pristine island during WWII. Music and lyrics by David Kirshenbaum; book by Hunter Foster. \$25-\$65. Wed.-Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. In previews for a 1/10 opening. •

Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).

Now Playing

And God Created Great Whales

Rinde Eckert returns with his terrific show about a frazzled piano tuner who attempts to compose a great opera based on *Moby-Dick*. It's an all-too-rare instance of experimental theater where the experiment actually works. \$35. Tues.-Sat. at 8, Sun. at 4. Through 1/13/02. • 45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

Are You Dave Gorman?

A solo show by comedian Dave Gorman. \$25-\$40. Wed.-Sat. at 8. • Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-741-0391).

Big Top Doo-Wop

Big Apple Circus returns with its latest spectacle, starring the clown Grandma (Barry Lubin). \$18-\$65. Call for schedule. Through 1/6. • Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center (212-307-4100).

Blue Man Group: Tubes

Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, tourists, haters and lovers of performance art. \$55-\$65. Tues.-Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 2, 5, and 8. Opened: 11/17/91. • Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).

A Christmas Carol

The delightful annual tradition, begun by the late Mike Ockrent and carried on by his wife, director-choreographer Susan Stroman (*The Producers*, *Contact*), now stars a grizzled Tim Curry as Scrooge. \$25.50-\$91.50. Call for schedule. Through 12/27. • Theatre at Madison Square Garden, Seventh Ave. at 32nd St. (307-7171).

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)

An uninspired crash-course through the Bard's works. \$25-\$55. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2, 5, and 8, Sun. at 4. • Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).

De La Guarda

A raucous show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. \$20-\$50. Tues.-Fri. at 8, Fri. at 10:30, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. • Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).

The Donkey Show

A wild, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. Cable sex icon Robin Byrd hosts on Wednesdays. \$39.

Wed.—Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. • El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).

Elaine Stritch at Liberty

The extraordinary Elaine Stritch has collaborated with *New Yorker* writer John Lahr and director George C. Wolfe to present a biographical solo show. She's sure to sing her signature song, "The Ladies Who Lunch" from *Company*, but you should also expect her to riff on old friends like Brando, Matthau, Coward, and Clurman. \$40. Wed.—Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Everett Beekin

Bebe Neuwirth stars in Richard Greenberg's latest, which crosscuts between Jewish families in forties New York and nineties Orange County. \$55. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).

The Fantasticks

The enchanting musical that has launched many a career (including Jerry Orbach's) since "Try to Remember" was first sung 41 years ago. \$36.50–\$39. Tues.—Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. • Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).

Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey

Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof of musicals past and present. \$49.50–\$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8:15, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. • Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

The Glory of Living

Philip Seymour Hoffman directs Anna Paquin in provocative Rebecca Gilman's drama about an abused teenager and her brutal ex-con husband. \$37.50. Mon.—Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. • MCC Theater, 120 W. 28th St. (212-206-1515).

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change

They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. A musical revue about heterosexual love. \$49.50–\$60. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 8/1/96. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Iphigeneia at Aulis

Agamemnon and his daughter Iphigeneia clash in this Euripides classic, directed by the Pearl Theatre's Shepard Sobel. \$28–\$25. Tues. at 7, Thurs.—Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • Theatre 80, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).

Love, Janis

An enjoyable new bio-musical based on *Love, Janis* by Joplin's sister Laura and performed by a trio of actresses. \$35–\$75. Tues.—Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 12/31. • Village Theater, 158 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).

Marc Salem's Mind Games, Too

The mentalist Marc Salem reads minds and blows them, with mind-reading, mind-over-matter tricks, and some good-spirited audience interaction. \$45. Tues.—Sat. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 1/13/02. • The Duke on 42nd St., 229 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Metamorphoses

Mary Zimmerman uses a 27-foot-wide pool of water to stage her Ovid-inspired work, an inventive and moving collection of fables about transformation. \$55. Tues., Thurs.—Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • Second Stage Theatre, 307 W. 43rd St. (212-246-4422).

Murdered by the Mob

Interactive off-line entertainment: a mob dinner where a crime unfolds in front of your pasta. \$55. Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 7. • Arno Ristorante, 141 W. 38th St. (800-687-3374).

Naked Boys Singing

Just like a regular musical revue, but without pants. \$35–\$50. Mon., Wed.—Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, and Sun. at 3 and 7. • Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).

Othello

Two of our finest Shakespearean actors take the stage. Keith David plays the title role; Liev Schreiber plays Iago.

go. Former Long Wharf Theatre artistic director Doug Hughes directs. \$25–\$35. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat. and Sun. at 2. • The Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Perfect Crime

The long-running thriller. \$35. Mon. and Thurs.—Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 4/5/87. • Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (212-695-3401).

Psych

Jim Simpson directs a dark new comedy by Evan Smith (*The Uneasy Chair*) about a graduate student who works part-time as a dominatrix. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 12/30. • Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).

Puppetry of the Penis

An oddly innocent lesson in "the ancient Australian art

ick Weller star in the latest wicked drama by Neil LaBute, the author of *bash* and the filmmaker behind *In the Company of Men*. The play tracks an ambitious artist who bends an unwitting lover to her peculiar will and is a hit-and-miss jumble of intense provocations and unbelievable motivations. \$65. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).

Six Goumbas and a Wannabe

A predictable mob comedy by Vincent Gogliormella. \$49.50. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. • Playerson Theatre, 115 MacDougal St. (212-239-6200).

Songs of Paradise

Folksbiene Yiddish Theatre stages a satirical version of the Book of Genesis. \$35–\$40. Wed. and Thurs. at 2 and 8, Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 5:30. Through 12/23. • Theater Four, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200).

Previews

Strong Arms

Most of us are so flooded with the dreadful details of war that we don't have time to consider its absurdities. But here comes the Jean Cocteau Repertory reviving *Arms and the Man*, George

Bernard Shaw's comic classic (with Amanda Jones and Jason Crowl, pictured) about a Swiss mercenary with a sweet tooth who hides from the Serb army in a respectable Serbian lady's boudoir. "When a thing is funny," Shaw once said, "search it for a hidden truth." Performances begin December 7. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")



Speaking in Tongues

Despite an impressive opening scene, this mysterious drama by Aussie playwright Andrew Bovell, the author of *Strictly Ballroom*, feels more contrived than complex. \$55. Tues.—Sat. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 2. • The Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. (212-307-4100).

Stomp

A boisterous riot of found-object percussion. \$29.50–\$55. Tues.—Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. • Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).

The Streets of New York

A flat new adaptation of Dion Boucicault's musical, with songs and direction by Charlotte Moore. \$35–\$40. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).

The Syringa Tree

Kate Blumberg plays 28 characters in Pamela Gien's superb solo drama about a young girl coming to terms with life in sixties South Africa. It's a surprising and unpredictable, utterly believable and affecting tale of family love and loss amid the violence of apartheid. \$49.50. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. • Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).

Tick... Tick... Boom!

This passionate, semi-autobiographical musical by the late Jonathan Larson (*Rent*) tracks the life of a struggling composer about to turn 30. Pulitzer winner David Auburn (*Proof*) shaped the script; Scott Schwartz (*Bat Boy*) directs. Now starring New Kids on the Block vet Joey McIntyre. \$30–\$55. Wed.—Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • Jane Street Theatre, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).

Tintypes

Melting Pot Theatre stages the patriotic 1941 musical by Mary Kyte, Mel Marvin, and Gary Pearlle. \$45. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • McGinn Cazale Theatre, Broadway at 76th St. (212-279-4200).

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding

A wedding and reception, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and, with more than 4,000 performances, it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. \$75–\$80. Thurs.—Sun. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88. • St. Luke's Church, 308 W.

of genital origami." Two Australian comedians perform penile contortions like "The Hamburger," and "The Windsurfer." \$29.90–\$39.90. Tues.—Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 9:30, Sun. at 7. • John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Repertorio Español's Festival of Jewish Latin American Theatre

The festival kicks off with Alejandro Samek's *Volvió Una Noche* (*She Returned One Night*), a magic-realist tale about a Jewish mother who comes back from the grave after her son has married a Latino Catholic woman. \$25–\$40. Call for schedule. Through 12/23. • Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).

Roadside

This Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt musical pays tribute to the Wild West. \$45. Tues.—Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 8. Through 12/23. • York Theatre at St. Peter's, 619 Lexington Ave. (212-239-6200).

The Shape of Things

Gretchen Mol, Paul Rudd, Rachel Weisz, and Freder-

46th St., and Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).

True Love

Charles L. Mee's *True Love*, an exploration of love set in a gas station, follows *First Love* and *Big Love* (opening soon at BAM). \$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10. Through 1/20/02. • The Zipper, 336 W. 37th St. (212-239-6200).

Underneath the Lintel

In Glen Berger's new play, subtitled "The Mystery of the Abandoned Trousers," a librarian begins a peculiar investigation after discovering a returned book that is 123 years overdue. \$40. Tues.–Thurs. and Sat. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).

The Vagina Monologues

Eve Ensler oral history of a body part stitches together testimony from women from all over the world, from those who have experienced terrible abuse to those who have invented cute nicknames for this play's namesake. Originally a one-woman show, it's now performed by a rotating trio of actresses. \$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. • Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).

Voice of the Turtle

John van Druten's WWII romantic comedy. \$35. Tues.–Thurs. at 7, Fri.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 12/30. • Mint Theater, 311 43rd St. (212-315-0231).

What Goes Up

In this family-friendly performance, the Flaming Idiots perform comic gymnastics and make bologna sandwiches with their toes. \$10–\$40. Call for schedule. Through 1/13/02. • New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).

Where's My Money?

John Patrick Shanley's dark comedy about Brooklyn divorce lawyers transfers to the MTC. \$45. Tues.–Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. • MTC Stage 2 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Wonder of the World

You couldn't ask for a better comic cast. Sarah Jessica Parker plays a frazzled heroine on the verge in this gag-happy comedy, supported by Marylouise Burke, Kevin Chamberlin (*Dirty Blonde*), and the ever-wonderful and goofy Amy Sedaris. Despite the mixed reviews, playwright David Lindsay-Abaire (*Fuddy Meers*), may be Off Broadway's hottest young talent. \$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7. • MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).

Off-Off Broadway

Ajax (por nobody)/No Mother to Guide Her

The Bat Theatre Company revives two of its most successful recent works. Alice Tuan's *Ajax* runs Thurs. at 9, Fri. and Sat. at 10. Lillian Hellman's drama runs Fri. and Sat. at 7. Through 12/22. • Flea Theater, 41 White St. (212-226-2407).

Arms and the Man

Ernest Johns directs George Bernard Shaw's wartime comedy. \$15–\$40. Call for schedule. Through 3/28. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Bed of Light

Jane Catherine Shaw stages scenes from friends' dreams with life-size puppets. \$15. Thurs.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 2:30. Through 12/16. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Christmas With the Crawfords

The campy holiday show returns, starring Joey Arias as a very upset Joan Crawford who greets Judy Garland, Gloria Swanson, and Mae West on Christmas Eve in 1944. \$40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 7. Through 1/5/01. • Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-439-5135).

Cracked

David Vining's new play stages the homecoming of a prodigal son with a drug rap. \$15. Wed.–Fri. at 7. Through 12/14. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202).

Criss Angel Mindfreak

A futuristic illusion and escape art show. \$15–\$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Fri. at 10, Wed. at 3, Sat. at 2 and 5. • World Underground Theater at WWF New York, Broadway, at 43rd St. (212-307-4100).

Dragapella Starring the Kinsey Sicks

The satirical "dragapella" act Kinsey Sicks kicks off its latest parodic performance. \$50–\$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 7. • Upstairs at 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).

Drummer Wanted

Richard Maxwell's new "personal-injury-case musical" about a suburban drummer who lives at home with his mother. \$17. Wed.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 12/23. • P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. (212-477-5933).

The Eight: Reindeer Monologues

Adobe Theatre Company revives its 1995 comedy about a Claus who commits a terrible crime. \$15. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/22. • Ohio Theater, 66 Wooster St. (212-279-4200).

Fifty Million Frenchman

A concert production of Cole Porter's comedy. \$19. Tues.–Fri., Sun. at 7, Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sun. at 2. Through 12/16. • 14th St. Y, 344 E. 14th St. (212-362-0713).

A Flea in Her Ear

Pulse Ensemble Theatre stages George Feydeau's raunchy sex farce, directed by Alexa Kelly. \$18. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. • John Houseman Studio Theater, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-695-1596).

Fight

A dark two-person comedy set in an airport, written and directed by Timothy P. Jones, who did an excellent job directing both *See Bob Run* and *Never Swim Alone*. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 12/16. • Sande Shurin Theater, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-946-1054).

A Gilbert & Sullivan Christmas Carol

A revival of the musical adaptation of the Dickens story. \$20. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 12/16. • Jose Quintero Theatre, 534 W. 42nd St. (718-777-8486).

The Guys

Maybe Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul* won't be the most talked-about play of the winter: Bill Murray and Sigourney Weaver pair up for workshop performances of the first play directly confronting the September 11 tragedy. Anne Nelson's drama tracks a fire captain who asks an editor to help him write his eulogies for his men, and will be performed, appropriately, just blocks from ground zero. \$15. Mon.–Thurs. at 7. Through 12/20. • Flea Theater, 41 White St. (212-226-2407).

The Insurrection Mass with Funeral March for a Rotten Idea

In its response to the aftermath of September 11, Bread and Puppet Theatre stages a "nonreligious service in the presence of several paper maché gods." \$10. Wed.–Sun. at 8. • Theater for a New City, 155 First Ave. (212-254-1109).

Kiki & Herb: There's a Stranger in the Manger!

The inimitable cabaret duo Kiki & Herb have made their phenomenally twisted holiday show a downtown tradition as viable as an egg nog hangover. Make their wicked renditions of Radiohead, Britney Spears, and Mary J. Blige tunes a part of your family tradition. \$30–\$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30. Through 12/31. • Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-741-0391).

The Last Carburetor

Leon Chase's new drama revolves around a family's wrecked 1970 Plymouth Hemi Barracuda, and stars the talented downtown actress Susan O'Connor (*Never Swim Alone*, *See Bob Run*). \$15. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30. Through 12/22. • Present Company Theatatorium, 196–198 Stanton St. (212-330-9380).

Listen Houdini

Axis Theatre presents a new drama that pits Houdini, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and medium Margery Crandon against one another. \$20. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/22. • Axis Theatre, 1 Sheridan Square (212-807-9300).

Little Ham: A Harlem Musical

A new musical based on the Langston Hughes play. \$19. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 12/30. • Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. (212-563-2565).

Miranda July: The Swan Tool

Multimedia performance artist Miranda July returns with a fractured tale about a conflicted woman. \$18. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/15. • The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793).

Monday Night Magic

Internationally known magicians munch on glass, puncture flailing assistants with swords, steal your

watch, yank rabbits from hats, etc., all in an intimate setting. \$25–\$27.50. Mon. at 8. • Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-615-6432).

Mono

An inventive, interactive play set in a barlike environment, with a sock puppet. \$10–\$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. • Surf Reality, 172 Allen St. (212-358-3447).

Mrs. Feuerstein

Padua Playwrights stages a new drama about a Holocaust-obsessed writing teacher by Off Broadway veteran Murray Mednick. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Through 12/16. • Chashama Theatre, 135 W. 42nd St. (212-591-1343).

Neil's Garden

First-time playwright Geoffrey Hassman's drama. Mon.–Sat. and Mon. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 12/23. • Rattlestick Theater, 224 Waverly Pl. (212-239-6200).

Novel

Lorca Peress directs Nick Bellitto's new drama about a distraught novelist. \$15. Fri. and Sat. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Through 12/23. • Here, 145 Sixth Ave., at Dominick St. (212-647-0202).

Oedipus the King

Jean Cocteau Rep stages the classic. \$15–\$40. Call for schedule. Through 1/24. • Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).

Peter Pan

Irondale Ensemble Project stages a dark version of the classic, replete with rusted toys and *Lord of the Flies* overtones. \$25. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/22. • Theatre for the New City, 155 First Ave. (718-488-9233).

Rebel Without a Pause

Having ditched the monologue she planned to deliver after the events of September 11, solo performer Reno is confronting the WTC disaster, the war, and more. \$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 10, Sun. at 5:30. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

Return

J Mandle Performance stages an experimental production about a lost WWII Air Force navigator. \$15–\$20. Tues.–Sat. at 8. Through 12/22. • Gale Gates et al., 37 Main St. (718-246-7440).

Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Bombing

The perorating contrarian takes on the Bush Administration. \$10. Sun. at 7. • Culture Project Theatre, 45 Bleeker St. (212-253-9983).

Santa Claus Is Coming Out

Jeffrey Solomon's campy solo show about Kris Kringle, the swingin' single. \$25. Mon, Fri., and Sat. at 8, Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 1/7. • Gene Frankel Theatre, 24 Bond St. (212-206-1515).

[sic]

The Obie-winning Soho Rep stages Melissa James Gibson's new comedy about three neighbors: a novelist, a musician, and an auctioneer. \$15. Wed.–Sat. at 7:30. Through 1/18. • Soho Rep, 46 Walker St. (212-479-7979).

Star Messengers

The inventive Bessie- and Obie-winning Talking Band stages a new music-theater work about Galileo by Paul Zimet and Ellen Maddow. \$15. Wed.–Sun. at 7:30, Sun. at 2:30. Through 12/16. • La MaMa E.T.C., 74A E. 4th St. (212-475-7710).

The Stranger

Horse Trade Theater stages Frank Cwikkik's new adaptation of the Orson Welles spy classic *The Stranger*. \$15. Thurs.–Sun. at 7:30. Through 12/22. • Red Room, 85 E. 4th St. (212-539-7686).

Swimming to Cambodia

Spalding Gray revives his frenetic solo show. \$25. 12/10–12/12 at 8. • Performing Garage, 33 Wooster St. (212-966-3651).

Two Rooms

In Lee Blessing's suddenly timely drama, Arab terrorists hold an American hostage in Beirut. \$19. Thurs.–Mon. at 8, some Sundays. • Blue Heron Theatre, 123 E. 24th St. (212-979-5000).

Unity Fest

The fourth annual gay play festival returns with a three new plays by Chay Yew (*Porcelain*, *Wonderland*), and works by Linda Eisenstein, Gary Garrison, Amy A. Kirk, and David Pumo. Each night, the festival stages six short plays. \$15. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 12/30. • Bank Street Theater, 155 Bank St. (212-358-3557).

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Helen Frankenthaler

Recent full-scale paintings from the artist's "Light-house" series; through 1/12/02. • Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

Tom Goldenberg

Rigorously composed paintings of Dutchess County landscapes by a former abstract painter; through 12/28/02. • Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606).

Aristodimos Kaldis

Intensely colored, quirkily structured paintings from the late thirties through the early fifties that presage his later, more fluid landscapes; through 1/12/02. • Bookstein, 50 E. 78th St. (212-439-9605).

Roy Lichtenstein

Paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the artist's estate, dating from the late fifties through the nineties, at Mitchell-Innes & Nash, through 1/12/02, and black-and-white paintings from the early sixties, at Gagosian, through 12/22. • Mitchell-Innes & Nash, 1018 Madison Ave. (212-744-7400), and Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (212-744-2313).

Barbara Takenaga

Small-scale abstract paintings that consist of repeated circular forms enclosing spiraling lines that suggest Tibetan wheels of life, hairy rosettes, or references to sixties psychedelia; through 1/12/02. • Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. (212-535-5767).

57th Street Area

Richard Baker

Recent still-paintings by this artist known for his simple, elegiac compositions; through 1/26/02. • Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-6780).

Robert Berling/Edward Gorey

New landscape paintings of scenes in Maine and upstate New York/A selection of drawings by the late illustrator and writer. Through 12/22. • De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-262-5050).

Burgoyne Diller/Theodore Stamos

Paintings and drawings from the thirties, the decade in which the artist's work evolved from Cubism to non-objective Neoplasticism/Abstract paintings from the late forties, the artist's formative years. Through 1/12/02. • Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (212-247-0082).

Gabriel Orozco

Sculptures, drawings, and photographs made in Costa Rica, Mexico City, New York, and Paris; through 12/29. • Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (212-977-7160).

Mark Rothko

Forty of the artist's Depression-era urban scenes, still lifes, and nudes from the thirties and forties; through 1/5/02. • PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292).

Daniel Senise

Weathered fragments and strips of canvases affixed to wood panels in compositions based on actual museum interiors; through 1/5/02. • Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-9090).

Neil Welliver

A survey of the artist's early paintings of nude female figures in forest settings from the late sixties and early seventies; through 1/26/02. • Alexandre, 41 E. 57th St. (212-755-2828).

William Zorach

Cast-bronze and carved wood and stone sculptures of the cats, dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, frogs, fish, and fowl that were part of the artist's natural surroundings at his summer home in Maine; through 1/5/02. • Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Tacita Dean

Photogravures based on postcards collected by the artist that transform each postcard image into the final scene of an imagined film, complete with inscribed stage directions; through 2/2/02. • Blum, 99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441).

Valentina DuBasky

New paintings and monotypes of images seen by the artist during her travels along the silk route, from Italy to Asia; through 1/15/02. • Pelavin, 13 Jay St. (212-925-9424).

Peter Hristoff

New paintings and works on paper, including a monumental Vanitas painting and a 40-foot-long work titled *The History of Anatolian Folk Music*; through 12/22. • Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-219-2863).

Mia Westerlund Roosen

Large hand-built concrete sculptures that are emphatically loopy and bring to mind mechanical contraptions and the cartoony exaggerations of Philip Guston's late paintings; through 1/12/02. • Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (212-941-0012).

Chelsea

John Ahearn

Recent cast plaster and fiberglass sculptures; through 1/12/02. • Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474).

Louise Bourgeois

New figurative and abstract sculptures in stitched fabric that continue the artist's recent exploration of her relationship to her mother; through 1/5/02. • Cheim & Read, 547 W. 25th St. (212-242-7727).

Tony Conway

Minimal paintings over manipulated digital photographs of cityscapes; through 1/5/02. • Senior & Shopmaker, 21 E. 26th St. (212-213-6767).

Arturo Elizondo

Colorful large-scale paintings inspired by Marcel Duchamp and mixing a Duchampian perspective with fragmented references to Mexican iconography; through 1/10/02. • Nosei, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-741-8695).

Carlos Garaicoa

Works that muse on the fragility of the urban landscape, including a video and sculpture that features aerial views of New York, Havana, and Yokohama; an ideal fantasy cityscape made from paper lamps, and photographs and drawings that transform urban ruins into poetic monuments; through 1/5/02. • Lombard-Freid, 531 W. 26th St. (212-967-8040).

Patrick Mimran

A monumental installation of an updated Tower of Babel with windows that reveal audio and visual components; through 1/6/02. • Marlborough Chelsea, 211 W. 19th St. (212-463-8634).

Karim Noureldin

A site-specific installation of wall drawings; through 1/19/02. • Schoormans, 508 W. 26th St. (212-2443-3159).

Graham Parks/Frank Breuer

Paintings of abstracted views of buildings and trees/Large-format color photographs of large outdoor signs. Through 1/12/02. • Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

Aaron Plant/Adam Hurwitz

Color photographs that simultaneously investigate and create the "secret life" of children/Small, intensely glowing paintings of images drawn from instructional videotapes for plastic surgeons. Through 12/22. • Debs, 525 W. 26th St. (212-643-2070).

David Row

"Reverse Pop" paintings, prints, and drawings that unite an abstract image with the artist's "pop tech" method of production; through 1/19/02. • Von Lintel, 555 W. 25th St. (212-242-0599).

Edited by Edith Newhall

Lucas Samaras

An installation of hundreds of paintings, objects, and papers slathered in polychrome paint that continues the artist's exploration of the use of paint as an object; through 1/5/02. • PaceWildenstein, 534 W. 25th St. (212-421-3292).

Fred Stonehouse

Paintings, works on paper combining paint and collage, and a larger banner painting; through 1/5/02. • Scott, 529 W. 20th St. (646-486-7004).

Patrick Strzelec

Sculptures that consist of brightly colored cast-rubber tubes draped over free-standing steel armatures, and related drawings that further illustrate the artist's exploration of the compression of space; through 1/12/02. • Grimm, 505 W. 28th St. (212-564-7662).

Xavier Veilhan

Works in which large grids of light bulbs are used to transmit dreamlike moving images derived from low-resolution films; through 1/12/02. • Gering, 534 W. 22nd St. (646-336-7185).

May Wilson

Whimsical collages that the late artist began making in 1965 using soft-porno images as a base for snowflake-pattern cutouts, and works from her "ridiculous portraits" series, for which she would have her picture taken at photobooths and superimpose a cutout image of her face into scenes in prints, reproductions of paintings, and photographs; through 12/29. • Gracie Mansion, 504 W. 22nd St. (212-645-7656).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Baumgold

"Double Visions," 29 artists represented by two works each, among them Blosser, Böröcz, Castle, Copley, Gandolph, Marten, Worth, Yoshida; through 1/5/02. • 74 E. 79th St. (212-861-7338).

Zwirner & Wirth

Surreal and surrealism-influenced works by Bellmer, Bourgeois, Broodthaers, Celmins, Ernst, Gober, Magritte; through 1/31/02. • 32 E. 69th St. (212-517-8677).

57th Street Area

Cohan

Classical and contemporary works that represent "the passions," by Arbus, Brueghel, Bourgeois, Cranach, Dürer, Katz, Koons, Mueck, Nauman, Tomaselli, Viola, others; through 1/12/02. • 41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171).

St. Etienne

Works on paper by Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele; through 1/5/02. • 24 W. 57th St. (212-245-6734).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Exit Art

"Boomerang—Collectors' Choice," an annual exhibit in which people with diverse interests in the art world are invited to act as guest curators; through 12/29. • 548 Broadway (212-966-7745).

Hoffman

Orchid-inspired paintings by Bierk, Brady, Depman, Gregory, Halili, Moore, Raffael, Richards; through 1/16/02. • Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

Chelsea

Metro Pictures

Deadpan photographs of street scenes, people, and do-

Ground Rules Galleries are generally open Tuesday through Saturday, from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

mestic situations by John Miller; delicate mobiles and sculptures by Pae White, and a large multi-part black glass sculpture in the forms of drops and puddles by Fred Wilson; through 1/12/02. • 519 W. 24th St. (212-206-7100).

Taylor

"Humanoid," paintings, sculpture, photographs, and video inspired by, though not necessarily representative of, the human form, by Church, Davidson, Diamond, Levy, Long, Ramirez, Yoder, others; through 1/12/02. • 535 W. 22nd St. (646-230-0992).

Van de Weghe

Sculptures by Calder, Serra, Stella; through 1/26/02. • 521 W. 23rd St. (212-929-6633).

Photography

Eugène Atget

Rare photographs taken between 1910 and 1913 at the edge of Paris known as the Zone Militaire, a no-man's land of trailers, gypsies, and rag-pickers; through 1/5/02. • Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (212-794-4444).

Wynn Bullock/Mark Mann

Vintage prints, ranging from the photographer's nude solarizations of the thirties to his last nature close-ups of the early seventies/New Cibachromes of family-

permanent collection, among them *Good*, part of Barbara Bloom's series of installations depicting the Seven Deadly Sins; through 12/30. • 1133 Sixth Ave. (212-860-1777). Tues.-Thurs. 10-5, Fri. 10-8, Sat. and Sun. 10-6; \$9, \$6 students and seniors.

John Pfahl

Large-format color photographs that capture horticulture at its most extreme, from majestic Huntington Gardens to Robert Irwin's Zen-like spaces; through 1/5/02. • Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

Joel Sternfeld

Images that continue the photographer's documentation of the abandoned elevated railway, the High Line, on Manhattan's West Side; through 1/5/02. • Pace/MacGill, 534 W. 25th St. (212-759-7999).

August Strindberg

A traveling exhibition organized by the Strindberg Museum in Stockholm, of the Swedish playwright's portraits, self-portraits, and experiments with abstraction; through 1/28/02. • Scandinavia House, 58 Park Ave. (212-779-3587).

Masao Yamamoto

Intentionally stained, bent, and scratched photographs of simple objects and scenes that explore memory, ambiguity, and the passage of time; through 1/19/02. • Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. (646-230-9610).

through 5/27. • "Meeting God: Elements of Hindu Devotion." A portrait of Hinduism in photographs, devotional objects, and video-portraits; through 2/24/02. • "The Genomic Revolution." An exhibition examining developments in this key field of molecular biology through hands-on models, interactive stations, videos, films, and polling stations; through 1/1/02. • Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.-Thurs. 10-5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10-8:45; \$10 suggested contribution, \$7.50 students and seniors, \$6 children.

Asia Society and Museum

"Conversations With Traditions: Nilima Sheikh and Shahzia Sikander." Works by two female South Asian artists who draw on traditional techniques of Indian miniature painting; through 2/17/02. • "Monks and Merchants: Silk Road Treasures From Northwest China, 4th to 7th Century"; through 1/6/02. • "The Creative Eye: New Perspectives on Asia Society's Rockefeller Collection." Selections from the Society's renowned permanent collection; through 4/14/02. • 725 Park Ave. (212-288-6400). Tues.-Sun. 11-6 (Fri. 11-9, free admission 6-9); \$7, \$4 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

"Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art From the British Museum." More than 140 ancient Egyptian masterpieces, many of which have never before traveled to the United States; through 2/24/02. • "Vital

Forms: American Art and Design in the Atomic Age, 1940-1960." An exhibition exploring the development of nature-based imagery in architecture, decorative and industrial art, graphic design, painting, photography, and sculpture in the years following World War II; through 1/6/02. • "Wit & Wine: A New Look at Ancient Iranian Ceramics From the Arthur M. Sackler Foundation." Forty-five vessels that illustrate the 5,000-year ceramic tradition that flourished in pre-Islamic Iran until 100 B.C.E.; through 12/30. • 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000). Wed.-Fri. 10-5, Sat. 11-6 (till 11 p.m. on the first Sat. of every month), Sun. 11-6; \$4, \$2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution

"Russel Wright: Creating American Lifestyle." A retrospective of the American designer's work, including examples of his dinnerware, furniture, appliances, textiles, and interiors; through 3/10/02. • "Glass of the Avant-Garde: From Vienna Secession to Bauhaus." The first public exhibition of the Torsten Bröhan Collection from the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas in Madrid, Spain, featuring glass works by the master glass house Lötzwitz; by Seces-

sionist and Wiener Werkstätte designers such as Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser, and Dagobert Peche, and by Wilhelm Wagenfeld and other Bauhaus designers; through 2/24/02. • 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300). Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5, Tues. 10-9 (5-9 free admission); \$8, \$3 students and seniors.

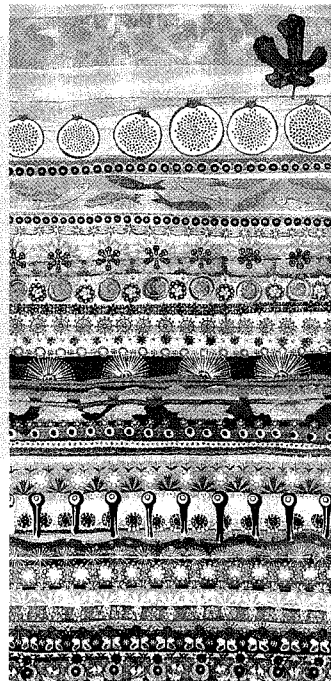
Dia Center for the Arts

"Roni Horn: Blah, blah, blah, your hair, Blah, blah, blah, your eyes; Blah, blah, blah, care, Blah, blah, blah, skies." Three new photographic series and a glass sculpture that continue the artist's exploration of the construction of identity; through 2/17/02. • "Alfred Jensen: Concordance." Key paintings by the Guatemalan-born Danish artist, including his final artistic statement, *Great Pyramid*, which is on public exhibition for the first time; through 6/16/02. • "Jorge Pardo and Gilberto Zorio: Reverb." The former's redesign of Dia's bookshop, lobby, and gallery and the latter's *Microfonia*, a sound work first created in 1969; through 6/16/02. • "Diana Thater: Knots & Surfaces." An environment of layered video projections and clustered monitors that interacts with the open space of Dia's third-floor gallery; through 6/16/02. •

Talent

Turkish Delight

Though he's returned to the small-scale paintings he handled so well in the past, **Peter Hristoff** has nonetheless not given up on his more recent larger forms. The artist's sprawling *Hully Gully*, which comprises more than 100 small panels, and his *History of Anatolian Folk Music*, made up of more than 40 pieces (pictured, an individual panel from the *History of Anatolian Folk Music*), continue his fascinatingly complex weaving of references to Turkish fabric, folk art, and folk songs while also mixing in such universal and personal symbols as skulls, masks, keys, stars, and birds. At David Beitzel Gallery, 102 Prince Street; through December 22.



vacation scenes derived from "Wish You Were Here" postcards. Through 1/5/02. • Miller, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-3930).

Harry Callahan/Emmet Gowin

A selection of eight-by-ten-inch contact prints by both photographers that reflects their shared intimate sensibility; through 1/12/02. • Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

Barbara Ess

A selection of the photographer's pinhole images from 1983 to the present, coinciding with the publication of the Aperture monograph, *I Am Not This Body: Photographs by Barbara Ess*; through 12/15. • Marcus, 578 Broadway (212-226-3200).

Elger Esser

Large, ethereal color photographs of rural landscapes defined by their horizon lines; through 12/31. • Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. (212-627-1018).

Ted Hardin

Amusing snapshots of Hell's Kitchen by a photographer who has contributed to numerous magazines, including this one; through 1/31/02. • St. Clement's and Hell's Kitchen/Clinton Theater Project, 423 W. 46th St. (212-246-7277).

ICP

"Helmut Newton: Work." A retrospective of the photographer's fashion images, portraiture, nudes, and montages; through 12/30. • "The Construction of the Paris Opera: Photographs of Delmaet & Durandelle." Photographs taken by the firm Delmaet & Durandelle that show the construction of the Paris Opera between 1864 and 1869; through 12/30. • "Greed and Other Acquisitions." Works recently acquired by ICP for its

Museums

American Craft Museum

"Objects for Use: Hand-made by Design." Functional works by 200 artists, among them Aroner, Hotchkiss, McKie, Rice, Teraki, Walden; through 1/6/02. • "Mikromegas." Whimsical stickpins by well-known jewelry designers; through 1/6/02. • 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), daily 10-6, Thurs. 10-8 (pay what you wish 6-8); \$7.50, \$4 students and seniors.

American Folk Art Museum

"Darger: The Henry Darger Collection at the American Folk Art Museum." The museum's first presentation of 26 large-scale, rarely seen paintings, plus drawings, original manuscripts, books, and sketches from the artist's archives; through 6/23/02. • "American Rhapsody: The Ralph Esmerian Gift to the American Folk Art Museum." Paintings, sculpture, pottery, textiles, furniture, and scrimshaw recently donated to the museum by the folk-art collector; through 6/2/02. • 45 W. 53rd St. (212-977-7170). Tues.-Sun. 10-6 (Fri. to 8); \$9, \$5 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History

"Pearls." The first exhibition ever presented on pearls, weaving science, art, history, and literature into the story of pearl-forming mollusks; through 4/14/02. • "The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter." An annual exhibit featuring 400 to 500 live butterflies from Central, South, and North America;

548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.-Sun. 12-6; \$6, \$3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center

"Heavenly Visions: Shaker Gift Drawings and Gift Songs." Approximately 130 drawings and song texts inspired by the unique spiritual practices and beliefs of the American religious community known as the Shakers; through 12/15. • 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.-Fri. 10-6, Sat. 11-6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection

"The Art of the Timekeeper: Masterpieces From the Winthrop Edey Bequest." The first exhibition of the watches and clocks given to the Frick Collection in 1999 by one of the most remarkable twentieth-century collectors of timepieces; through 2/24/02. • "Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Greentree Foundation." Paintings by Degas, Manet, Picasso, and

1/6/02. • 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.-Fri. 11-6, Sat. and Sun. 11-5; \$5, \$3 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum

"The Emergence of Jewish Artists in Nineteenth-Century Europe." An exhibition focusing on the creativity of Jewish artists within the context of nineteenth-century art, featuring paintings by Daniel Moritz Oppenheim, Camille Pissarro, Simeon Solomon, and others; through 3/17/02. • "Ben Katchor: Picture-Stories." The first museum exhibition devoted to the illustrations, graphic novels, and set designs of the creator of "Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer" and the comic-strip novel, *The Jew of New York*; through 2/10/02. •



He wrote it all down Zealously.

On View Edwardian Age

When the world seems especially fragile, there is nothing more reassuring than a story that probably won't happen to you. For some, solace is no further than the latest ghastly murder mystery, a *Brady Bunch* rerun... or an **Edward Gorey** book. As all Gorey addicts know, the ersatz Victorian ghoulishness of *The Gashlycrumb Tinies*,

The Curious Sofa, or *The Doubtful Guest* can make one's own dark preoccupations seem strikingly normal. In this particular winter of discontent, New Yorkers can raise their spirits with not only Karen Wilkins's *Ascending Peculiarity: Edward Gorey on Edward Gorey* (Harcourt; \$35), a selection of revealing interviews conducted with the late, erudite illustrator-writer, but a small exhibition of the master's original drawings (Tibor de Nagy Gallery, 724 Fifth Avenue, near 56th Street; through December 22), in which Gorey, or a Gorey surrogate, occasionally figures (pictured, "He wrote it all down Zealously," from *The Glorious Nosebleed*, 1974). Seen outside their books, Gorey's individual drawings are scrumptious hors d'oeuvre. But even between hard covers, Gorey knew to keep his readers hungry for more. "God knows that day-to-day reality is certainly drab to the point of lunacy sometimes," Gorey once explained. "And that means you *have* to leave an awful lot out."

E.N.

Redon; through 4/21/02. • 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.-Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-6; \$10, \$5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery

"Pastoral to Postindustrial: British Works on Paper From the Whitworth Art Gallery." Nineteenth- and twentieth-century watercolors and drawings from the University of Manchester's Whitworth Art Gallery, by artists ranging from J. M. W. Turner and John Constable to Damien Hirst and Rachel Whiteread; through 1/26/02. • 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11-6, Wed. 11-8, Sat. 11-5; \$2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum

"Norman Rockwell: Pictures for the American People." The most comprehensive exhibit ever assembled of the American artist and illustrator's work, including 70 paintings and all of the 322 covers he created for *The Saturday Evening Post*; through 3/3/02. • "Brazil: Body and Soul." A survey of artistic production in Brazil from the seventeenth century to the present; through 1/20/02. • 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500), Sun.-Wed. 9-6, Fri. and Sat. 9-8 (Fri. 6-8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; \$12, \$8 students and seniors.

Japan Society

"Traditional Japanese Design: Five Tastes." Ceramics, lacquer, metalwork, basketry, and textiles illustrating the five areas of aesthetic taste that developed between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in Japan; through

"Doug and Mike Starn: Rampart's Café." A multimedia installation with sound that evokes everyday life in Jerusalem; through 2/10/02. • "Arnold Dreyblatt: Re-Collection Mechanism." A multimedia environment of projected and recited text taken from *Who's Who in Central and Eastern Europe*; through 2/10/02. • 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200), Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11-5:45; Tues. 11-8 (Tues. after 5, pay what you wish), Fri. 11-3, Sun. 10-5:45; \$8, \$5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

"Splendid Isolation: Art of Easter Island." The first American exhibition devoted to the Polynesian art of Easter Island, featuring objects dating from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries; through 8/4/02. • "Bill Viola: The Quintet of Remembrance." A color-video installation inspired by the artist's study of late-medieval and early-renaissance paintings; through 5/5/02. • "Treasury of the World: Jeweled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals." More than 300 works of the Mughal period (1526-1858) on loan from the al-Sabah Collection in Kuwait; through 1/13/02. • "Signac 1863-1935: Master Neo-Impressionist." The first major exhibition in 40 years of the Neo-Impressionist's paintings, watercolors, drawings, and prints; through 12/30. • "Glass of the Sultans." Rare glass objects from the Islamic world, ranging from seventh-century works influenced by Imperial Roman glass-making traditions to nineteenth-century Persian and Indian glass; through 1/13/02. • "Candace Wheeler:

The Art and Enterprise of American Design, 1875-1900." Textiles, wallpapers, paintings, photographs, and objects by American's first important woman textile and interior designer; through 1/6/02. • "Courtly Radiance: Metalwork from Islamic India." Examples of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century metal vessels created for daily or ceremonial use; through 3/24/02. • "The Pharaoh's Photographer: Harry Burton, Tutankhamun, and the Metropolitan's Egyptian Expedition." Photographs taken between 1906 and 1939 by members of the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Expedition, the majority of which were taken by Harry Burton, the outstanding archeological photographer of his day;

through 3/31/02. • "Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Baroque Crèche."

The museum's annual presentation of a candlelit spruce and an eighteenth-century crèche scene (lighting ceremonies are performed Fri. and Sat. evenings at 7); through 1/6/02. • "Extreme Beauty: The Body Transformed." Costumes that conform the body to a physical ideal, ranging from a sixteenth-century iron corset to Thierry Mugler's "Motorcycle" bustier; through 3/3/02. • 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.-Thurs. and Sun. 9:30-5:30, Fri. and Sat. 9:30-9; \$10 contribution, \$5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.-Sun. 9:30-4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); \$10, \$5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library

"Views of Yellowstone: William Henry Jackson Photographs From the Gilder Lehrman Collection." Photographs taken of the Yellowstone region in 1872, the year before it became the first national park in the United States; through 1/20/02. • "Oscar Wilde: A Life in Six Acts." The life of the celebrated writer (1854-1900) as told through his books, manuscripts, portraits, letters, drawings, photographs, and ephemera; through 1/13/02. • "Cottontails and Corgis: The Children's Books of Beatrix Potter and Tasha Tudor"; through 1/27/02. • 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.-Thurs. 10:30-5, Fri. 10:30-8, Sat. 10:30-6, Sun. 12-6; \$8, \$6 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio

"O Fio da Trama/The Thread Unraveled: Contemporary Brazilian Art." Works in diverse media by 21 artists, among them Miguel Rio Branco, Vera Martins, Vik Muniz, and Ernesto Neto; through 2/3/02. • 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.-Sun. 11-5; \$5, \$3 students and seniors (through 8/30, free admission Thurs. from 5-8).

Museum for African Art

"Bamana: The Art of Existence in Mali." Sculptures, headdresses, masks, puppets, and other objects made by the Bamana people of Mali; through 3/3/02. • 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.-Fri. 10:30-5:30, Sat. and Sun. noon-6; \$5, \$2.50 students, seniors, and children.

Museum of Modern Art

"Alberto Giacometti." The first New York exhibition devoted to the work of the Swiss sculptor, painter, and draftsman since his last retrospective at MOMA in 1965; through 1/8/02. • "New to the Modern: Recent Acquisitions From the Department of Drawings." Works on paper by Janine Antoni, John Currin, Willem de Kooning, Ellsworth Kelly, Jacob Lawrence, Juan Muñoz, Martin Puryear, Andrea Zittel, and others; through 1/8/02. • "Projects 74: Ricci Albenda." An installation on the museum's mezzanine level that transforms the gallery's walls into sculptures that visitors can enter; through 1/22/02. • "Projects 73: Olafur Eliasson—Seeing yourself sensing." An installation that transforms the windows of the museum's Garden Hall into a work of art designed to alter viewers' perceptions; through 5/21/02. • "Collection Highlights." A selection of modern masterpieces from the museum's permanent collection, including works by Brancusi, Cézanne, Picasso, Pollock, and others; through 5/30/02. • 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.-Tues., Thurs. 10:30-5:45, Fri. 10:30-8:15 (4:30-8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; \$10, \$6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York

"The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Gray Bridge: Illustrations by Lynd Ward." Illustrations from the 1942 children's book that were recently given to the museum; through 4/28. • "Hirschfeld's New York." The first major museum exhibition of drawings by the New York illustrator known for his caricatures of Broadway personalities; through 1/27/02. • "The Children's Village: A Legacy of Caring." An exhibition celebrating the past, present, and future of residential treatment center that was founded in New York in 1851 and originally called the New York Juvenile Asylum; through 1/20/02. • 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 1-5; \$5 suggested contribution, \$4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology

"London Fashion." Clothing and accessories by some of the city's most influential contemporary designers, among them Hussein Chalayan, John Galiano, Alexander McQueen, and Vivienne Westwood; through 1/12/02. • "Yeohlee: Supermodern Style"; through 1/5/02. • Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.-Fri. noon-8, Sat. 10-5; free.

National Academy of Design

"David Smith: Two Into Three Dimensions." Sculptures, paintings, and drawings by the American sculptor (1906-1965) dating from the thirties to 1960; through 1/6/02. • "Louis Michel Eilshemius (1864-1941): An Independent Spirit." The first comprehensive exhibition of the American artist's work in more than twenty years; through 12/30. • 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs. noon-5, Fri. 10-6, Sat. and Sun. 10-5; \$8; \$4.50.

Neue Galerie

"New Worlds: German and Austrian Art, 1890-1940." The museum's inaugural exhibition, of selected works from its collection by Max Beckmann, Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, and others; through 2/18/02. • 1048 Fifth Ave.

wire figures alongside the wire-sculpted heads of young boys; through 1/13/02. • "A Work in Progress: Selections from the New Museum Collection." Works by Robert Colescott, Bob Flanagan, Hans Haacke, Mona Hatoum, David Wojnarowicz, and others; through 1/13/02. • "Dig." A site-specific installation by Jason Middlebrook; through 2/3/02. • "World Views." Works by 13 artists who were participants in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's artist-in-residence program from May to November of 2001, and had studios on the 92nd floor of Tower One of the World Trade Towers; through 1/13/02. • 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Tue.-Sun. noon-6, Thurs. noon-8 (\$3 admission Thurs. 6-8); \$6, \$3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library

"American Originals: Treasures From the National Archives." Original documents related to major milestones in American history and revealing the thoughts of such historic figures as Susan B. Anthony, George Washington, Martin Luther King Jr., and Franklin Roosevelt; through 1/5/02. • "The Public's Treasures: Americana From the New York Public Library." Selected displayed books and documents from the library's collections, including a copy of the first book printed in America; through 1/26/02. • Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089), Mon. 10-6, Tues. and Wed. 11-7:30, Thurs.-Sat. 10-6; free.

New-York Historical Society

"John Koch: Painting a New York Life." A retrospective of the realist painter (1909-1978) who chronicled mid-century life in New York City; through 1/27/02. • "75 Years of Holiday Magic: Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade." Photographs, drawings, and archival material chronicling the history of the parade; through 11/17/02. • "New York September 11 by Magnum Photographers." Photographs of the World Trade Center attack and its aftermath by Paul Fusco, Thomas Hoepker, Steve McCurry, Susan Meiselas, Gilles Peress,

the Canadian artist's installations and "Walks," in which visitors follow the artist's directions through a site; through 1/31/02. • "Richard Deacon: Recent Work." Five new steel sculptures by the British artist that are installed throughout the main outdoor gallery and appear to float above the ground; through 1/31/02. • "Kenny Scharf." Two new large-scale paintings and a series of 30 painted cels for *The Universals*, an animated television special that will make its debut on the Cartoon Network in the spring of 2002; through 1/30/02. • 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.-Sun. noon-6; \$5 suggested donation.

Studio Museum in Harlem

"Reflections in Black: Smithsonian African-American Photography." A two-part exhibition, "The First One Hundred Years, 1842-1942" and "Art and Activism," that explores the history of African-American photography from 1842 onward; through 12/16. • 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed., Thurs., Sat., and Sun. noon-6, Fri. noon-8; \$5, \$3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art

"Over the Line: The Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence." A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by the African-American artist (1917-2000) who took his subjects from the Civil War period of the 1860s to the Civil Rights movement of the sixties and beyond; through 2/3/02. • "Burt Barr: Projections." Four silent projections that subvert filmic devices; through 1/27/02. • "The Projected Image in American Art, 1964-1977." A survey of film, video, and slide installation works created from the sixties until 1977; through 1/6/02. • "Charles Burchfield: Works on paper by the American artist (1893-1967) known for his visionary interpretations of the American landscape; through 1/20/02. • "Sharon Harper: Photographs From the Floating World." Images of brooding landscapes as seen from high-speed trains; through 1/7/02. • 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues.-Thurs., Sat., Sun. 11-6, Fri. 1-9 (pay what you wish every Fri. 6-9); \$10, \$8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris

"Alex Katz: Small Paintings." A two-part exhibition of the artist's small paintings held concurrently at this location and at the Whitney Museum of American Art; through 1/4/02. • "E.V. Day: G-Force." An installation of suspended forms that references flight patterns of animals and man-made flying objects; through 1/4/02. • 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.-Fri. 11-6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's

12/12 and 12/13 at 10 and 2: "Fine and Rare Wine." 12/14 at 10 and 2: "Fine Printed Books and Manuscripts." On view from 12/9, 12/17 at 2 and 4: "Antique Glass Paperweights and Decorative Arts." On view from 12/12, 12/18 at 10: "Fine European and Oriental Rugs and Carpets." On view from 12/13. • 20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000).

Christie's East

12/12 at 10: "Rugs and Carpets." On view from 12/7, 12/13 at 10: "Antique and Fine Jewelry." On view from 12/8, 12/18 and 12/19 at 10: "European Furniture and Decorative Arts." On view from 12/13. • 219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430).

Doyle

12/12 and 12/13 at 10: "Couture, Textiles and Accessories." On view from 12/8. • 175 E. 87th St. (212-427-2730).

Phillips

12/12 at 2: "20th Century Design." On view from 12/7. • 406 E. 79th St. (212-570-4830).

Sotheby's

12/12 at 10:15 and 2: "Books and Manuscripts." On view from 12/7, 12/14 at 10:15 and 2: "Fine Oriental and European Carpets." On view from 12/9. • 1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000).

Swann Galleries

12/13 at 10:30: "100 Rare & Important Maps & Atlases." On view from 12/8, 12/13 at 2:30: "Fine Natural History & Historical Prints." On view from 12/8. • 104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710).

Photography

Hug a Cactus

In his latest series, "Extreme Horticulture," landscape photographer **John Pfahl** leads his fans on a tour of some of this country's most natural—albeit human-encouraged—extravagances, from California's awesomely manicured Huntington Botanical Gardens to kitschy displays at Florida's Cypress Gardens to extraordinary residences with extraordinarily prickly décor (pictured, *Relaxed Euphorbia*, 2000). At Janet Borden, 560 Broadway, at Prince Street; through January 5.



(212-628-6200), Fri., Sat., Mon. 11-7; Sun. 1-6; \$10, \$7 students and seniors.

New Museum of Contemporary Art

"Tom Friedman." A survey of the artist's sculptures, photographs, works on paper, and site-specific installations; through 2/3/02. • "Jacqueline Fraser: A Portrait of the Lost Boys." A site-specific installation depicting a progression of eleven life-size female

and Alex Webb; through 2/25/02. • 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.-Sun. 11-5; \$5, \$3 seniors and children.

P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center

"Animations." Works by 31 artists who use or reference animation, among the Francis Alys, Jeremy Blake, Liam Gillick, and Karen Yasinsky; through 1/20/02. • "Janet Cardiff: A Survey of Works, Including Collaborations With Georges Bures Miller." The first survey of

Restaurants

Edited by Robin Raisfeld
& Rob Patronite

New and Noteworthy

AKA Cafe

From the folks at 71 Clinton Fresh Food: Think 'ino meets Ratners, crossed with a little Chicama and a clever small-plates menu with nods toward the neighborhood and its suppliers. A pressed meat-loaf sandwich with red-onion relish and Gus's pickle slices on a Kossar's bialy; oyster soup with Streits's matzo on the side; perfectly flaky braised-pork empanadas—everything artfully presented with a dollop of tomato marmalade here, a dab of salsa rosado there. And nothing over \$7. • 49 Clinton St. (212-979-6096). (I)

★ AQ Café

Scandinavia House's sleek new concession run by Aquavit and its star chef, Marcus Samuelsson, provides a gastronomic introduction to Nordic culture. On the menu: textbook tender Swedish meatballs, a superb smorgasbord plate, and salmon lasagna crowned with ascending dollops of tomato salsa and salmon salad for which Samuelsson's mother country should award him a Nobel Prize. • 58 Park Avenue, at 38th St. (212-847-9745). (I)

★ Arezzo

An unlikely partnership between the owners of the Gotham Comedy Club and executive chef Margherita Aloï, formerly of Le Madri, Arezzo is nevertheless nothing to joke about. The menu, showcasing Aloï's signature fresh pastas, includes uncommon salads; "focaccina" halved and smeared with Robiola cheese, fresh spinach, and a touch of truffle oil; and a sensational dry-aged rib eye with herb-strewn Tuscan fries and tangy chopped dandelion. • 46 W. 22nd St. (212-206-0555). (M-E)

Opening

Pie Kind of Guy

Follonico closed last summer, but pasta partisans who mourned its demise will be happy to discover a new *cucina italiana* inhabiting its cozy Flatiron premises. **Ottimo** ("the best") is a none-too-humble collaboration between local winery owner Silvio Galterio (pictured, left) and Neapolitan chef Salvatore Esposito (right), who cooked most recently at La Pizza Fresca. He'll continue to ply his buffalo mozzarella-and-San Marzano tomato pizza trade, supplementing it with a full menu of mostly southern-Italian specialties like sautéed spinach with raisins and pine nuts, orecchiette with anchovies and broccoli rabe, and enough seafood to make one consider—momentarily, at least—forgoing the fried calzone stuffed with ricotta and bits of braised pork. (6 West 24th Street; 212-337-0074.)

Better Burger

From the owners of the quasi-vegetarian Josie's, a snappy fast-food stand that both carnivores and quasi-vegetarians will like. Free-range beef, chicken, and turkey burgers are cooked in a fat-draining contraption that looks like a giant George Foreman grill, while tuna, soy, and veggie versions are pan-seared. Likewise, crispy, crinkly French fries are almost virtuous, spritzed with olive oil and baked. Even the take on Mickey D's "special sauce" is made from Muir Glen tomatoes and Vegganaise. • 565 Third Ave., at 37th St. (212-949-7528). (I)

Bid

Tentation, the ritzy caterer that feeds Sotheby's collectors and curators, enlisted three-star chef Tom Colicchio to consult on its elegant new auction-house restaurant. With his own gifted hands quite full running the kitchens at Craft and Gramercy Tavern, Colicchio tapped longtime sous-chef Matthew Seeber to execute a menu of seasonal Americana like braised lobster with corn relish, sautéed quail with smoked bacon, and roasted lamb with Brin d'Amour and ratatouille. • 1334 York Ave., at 71st St. (212-988-7730). (E)

Blue Grotto

A loungelike space with oversized banquettes and a friendly welcome, plus a chef who used to cook at Lupa, which accounts for the marked Italian accent in dishes like house-cured cod with bread salad and dense gnocchi in a creamy broccoli pesto. But the selection of Spanish-inflected small plates like bacon-wrapped dates indicates a kitchen that eloquently speaks more than one culinary language. • 1576 Third Ave., nr. 88th St. (212-426-3200). (M)

Brooklyn Blue Ribbon

In the beginning, there was Blue Ribbon, which begat Blue Ribbon Sushi, which begat Blue Ribbon Bakery. It was only a matter of time, then, before brothers, chef-owners, and night owls Bruce and Eric Bromberg got around to Brooklyn. Although the space is bigger,

quite like this elegant evocation of a Viennese-style kaffeehaus at Ronald Lauder's Neue Galerie New York. The artistic sensibility permeates the café, with its reproductions of Josef Hoffmann scones, Adolf Loos bentwood chairs, and Otto Wagner fabrics. And the theme continues with tortes (Sacher and Linzer), Bavarian ham for breakfast, and cod strudel for lunch. • 1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (212-288-0665). (M)

★ Citarella: The Restaurant

Former Le Bernardin chef de cuisine Brian Young challenges the piscatory supremacy of his old boss Eric Ripert on the latter's own midtown surf and turf. Young brings to the battle an ambitious seafood menu (shaved geoduck clam with asparagus chives, a langoustine "roll," and a \$75 Asian-seafood tasting menu), plus former Bouley Bakery pastry chef Bill Yosses, and a design by David Rockwell. Not to mention an in at the fish market. • 1240 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-332-1515). (E)

Coconut Grove

At this Manhattan outpost of a thriving Indian chainlet, superstar chef Prem Kumar puts his elegant spin on Kerala's mixed colonial heritage. Upstairs, lithe young women in midriff-baring blouses and South Indian sarongs rush crisp and slightly spongy, crepe-like appams, hot from the flipping station, to be filled with all sorts of savory chutneys. Malabar lamb biryani, the peppered duck steak, and grouper fillets afloat in a haunting gingered coconut cream are standouts. • 44 W. 56th St. (212-765-1800). (M)

Danzon

From the mother-and-daughter team behind Zarela comes this culinary love letter to Veracruz, a Mexican melting pot of Spanish, African, Cuban, and Italian immigrants and indigenous ingredients. Seafood plays a major role, from fish tacos and lime-marinated-conch cocktail to the classic red snapper veracruzana. Wines are exclusively Spanish and Mexican, should one choose to veer off the fabled Zarela margarita path. • 126 E. 28th St. (212-252-1345). (M)

Deborah—Life Love Food

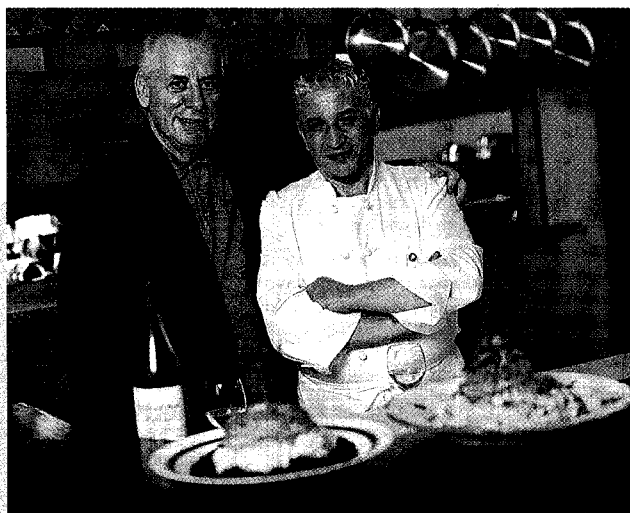
After legitimizing hemp as a cooking ingredient at Galaxy, taking an Asian-tropical detour to Miami at Chow, and grilling Korean barbecue at Woo Lae Oak, chef Deborah Stanton turns her attention to what she calls modern American comfort food. Mini meat loaf and pork chops are a given, but plundering the global larder for beer-battered fish and chips and a Cuban sandwich doesn't make her the least bit uncomfortable. • 43 Carmine St. (212-242-2606). (M)

Glass

Glass seems to have landed in its industrial no-man's-land location like some kind of high-style UFO, a glowing emissary from a civilization far more advanced than our own. (L.A., maybe?) The small-plate menu offers sevice, panini, a cheese plate, and mixed olives accompanied by some of the skinniest breadsticks around (to match the patrons, we surmise). There's heated competition for the bamboo garden's few plastic ball chairs, the hottest seat since Canteen's nubby orange number. • 287 Tenth Ave., nr. 26th St. (212-904-1580). (I-M)

The Harrison

Red Cat partners Jimmy Bradley and Danny Abrams take a gamble by opening a new hot spot blocks away from the hot zone. But if ricotta cavatelli with braised veal cheeks, honey-and-lime-glazed quail, and home-



Ground Rules These listings are a selective guide to the city's restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. Stars (★) indicate our critics' recommendations. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive; (M) = moderate; (I) = inexpensive. Restaurants listed accept all major credit cards, except where noted; (\$) = cash only; "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted card.

nade bresaola with taleggio fettunta and fig syrup aren't enough to lure diners back downtown, nothing s. • 355 Greenwich St. (212-274-9310). (M)

Heartland Brewery & Chop House

With hefty hunks of prime aged beef, braised buffalo short ribs, and lobster-and-crab stuffed ravioli—not to mention a superb artisanal cheese-and-beer tasting plate—this third branch of the popular brewpub chain s clearly the most culinarily ambitious. But the mood s still mellow, especially at the bar, a rare, comfortable Times Square spot to toss back some of the terrific hand-crafted brews. • 127 W. 43rd St. (646-366-0235). (M-E)

★ Ilo

Though its neutral, geometric décor may appear too understated to crest the torrential wave of hotel restaurants, Ilo makes the rest of them seem like washouts. Chef-owner Rick Laakkonen's charms and talents are many: a rich lemon-thyme-scented ragout of octopus and Manila clams; pan-roasted rabbit with olives and oregano; grilled quail devilishly grounded by white hominy; and a gloriously simple roasted duck that will make you consider taking up residence at the Bryant Park. • 40 W. 40th St. (212-642-2255). (E)

Jean-Luc

Ed "Jean-Luc" Kleefield aspired to bring downtown uptown, and he started out by recruiting former Raoul's chef Eric Le Dily, whose menu supplements standards like steak au poivre and lobster bisque with such newfangled notions as bison carpaccio and crab-crusted Chilean sea bass. The room is equally eclectic, mixing brick-red velvet banquettes and Biedermeier chairs with second-century mosaics. Bar menu, too. • 507 Columbus Ave., near 84th St. (212-712-1700). (M-E)

Man Ray

French record producer Thierry Klemenik has recruited a team of noted lounge lizards for this assault on late-night, glamorama New York. An old firehouse in Chelsea has been stuffed with lots of retro-looking Pan-Asian knickknacks, and the food is sometimes better than it should be. Chef Frédéric Kieffer mixes ingredients like flamboyant cocktails. He makes a nice rack of lamb (crusted in marjoram) and several good fish dishes (we liked the turbot), but stay away from the frog legs, served in a bubbly licorice broth. • 147 W. 15th St. (212-929-5000). (M-E)

Marseille

Named for the gritty, industrial port city, this Hell's Kitchen kitchen imbues the Film Center Building with a Casablanca-era French-Moroccan feel, replete with tile floor and zinc bar, but no piano. Chef Alex Ureña, late of Blue Hill, traverses the Mediterranean for stuffed zucchini blossoms, mussel bruschetta, rock-shrimp falafel, and the inevitable bouillabaisse. • 630 Ninth Ave., at 44th St. (212-333-3410). (M)

The Minnow

Aaron Bashy grew up in New England, trained at Le Bernardin, and has found, as is the current chef fashion, his own home on the range in Brooklyn. There's a bit of Ipswich in his fried-fish basket, and a recognition of the excruciatingly finicky New York dining public in his willingness to poach, sauté, grill, or fry any of the day's fresh catch, served with a choice of two sides. • 442 Ninth St., Park Slope, Brooklyn (718-832-5500). (M)

Minotaur Restaurant

The menu at this sophisticated Greek restaurant reaches back four millennia or so and includes "ancient Hellenic tastes," like venison Artemis in a red-wine sauce with chestnuts, pine nuts, and pomegranate seeds. But chef Stefanos Taktikos also caters to modern appetites with an assortment of grilled fish, and appetizers like an aspic of red snapper with dill and avocado, and mussels saganaki with feta. • 44 W. 58th St. (212-759-0502). (M-E)

★ Pizza 33

"A good pizza is like a woman," says Pizza 33's Rino LaCerra. "She's gorgeous when she gets out of the shower, but then you've got to be careful about putting on too much makeup." At this airy Murray Hill pizzeria, LaCerra practices that stripped-down pie-making

philosophy with top-notch ingredients and a white-hot brick oven. His (made-to-order) pizza margherita—light, crispy, and fragrant—is a natural beauty. • 489 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (212-545-9191). (I)

@SQC

At Avenue, Scott Campbell reacquainted New Yorkers with the often overlooked pleasures of brunch, and now he's brought his rich repertoire of soufflé pancakes, scallion-and-Montrachet scrambled eggs, and pudding-thick hot chocolate thirteen blocks south. Lunch runs the gamut from grain and vegetable salads to a burger with Belgian-style frites, and dinner has a decidedly French accent. • 270 Columbus Ave., near 72nd St. (212-579-0100). (M)

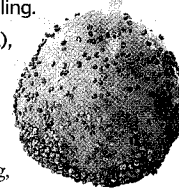
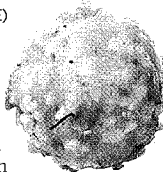
Shopping

Pop Goes the Liver

"I used to make chocolate Popsicles for my boys using candy molds," says chef David Burke of Park Avenue Café and ONEc.p.s. "Then, about two years ago, I was goofing around with cream cheese on a stick." Hence his three very novel, very adult savory **Gourmet Pops**, sold frozen but ready to pass as hors d'oeuvres after about 30 minutes' thawing. A morsel of cream-cheese mousse with capers and scallions, wrapped in fresh smoked salmon and perched on a stick, is what happens when Zabar's meets Good Humor; and the hunk of foie gras with white-truffle oil, dipped in port-wine-and-cranberry jelly and rolled in black pepper and fresh chives, is an absolute conversation-stopper. There's a goat-cheese pop, too, to keep vegetarians nibbling.

Available at Dean & DeLuca (560 Broadway, at Prince Street; 212-431-1691), Caviarteria (502 Park Avenue, at 59th Street; 212-925-5515), and www.gourmetpops.com, for \$18 to \$22 per dozen.

GILLIAN DUFFY



TanDa

Another Park Avenue South restaurant-lounge, this one from a few survivors of the original Moomba, and featuring Hong Kong chef Stanley Wong's Southeast Asian fare. Tan Da was a Vietnamese poet who wrote, "Food and wine are the essence of life." The corresponding significance of lounges and DJ's eluded him, but it's a safe bet that the owners of TanDa won't make the same mistake. • 331 Park Avenue S. (212-253-8400). (M-E)

★ Via Emilia

After playing it safe for years with a greatest-Italian-hits menu, the chef-owner of the former Trattoria i Pagliacci has returned to his Emilia-Romagna culinary roots. The menu features homemade tortellini and tortelloni, a preponderance of balsamic vinegar, and best of all, gnoccho fritto, a basket of puffy fritters served with great cured meats—street-festival fried dough gone to finishing school. • 240 Park Ave. S., nr. 20th St. (212-505-3072). (I-M)

Zitouné

It's the Arabic word for olive, a beloved soccer star of the eighties, and Moroccan-born Alain Bennouna's third effort to score on this corner. Chef-partner Julian Clauss-Ehlers's French training shows in the elegance of classics like cinnamon-stippled b'steeya (smartly using moist duck) and in fragrant harira—the meaty soup eaten to break the fasts of Ramadan. Add a point for gentle prices and a \$25 prix fixe with a glass of wine if you're willing to exit by 8 P.M. • 46 Gansevoort St. (212-675-5224). (M)

Manhattan

Lower New York

★ Ajisen Noodle

A lot of ramen around town can be disappointing—overcooked noodles in bland broth. But not at Ajisen Noodle. The pork-based house soup—one of three broth bases along with curry and miso—topped with sliced roast pork, scallions, and hard-cooked egg, is rich and satisfying, the whole-wheat noodles tender but firm. Even better is the "tenderous ribs" version, which

turns out to be soup with slow-cooked boneless pork ribs. • 14 Mott St. (212-267-9680). (I)

★ Chanterelle

The Waltucks, Karen and David, have specific ideas about how to make an evening unforgettable. The walls are without art. No music. Chairs are huge; plates are, too. The goal is to get you to concentrate solely on who you are with and what you are eating—the stunning juxtapositions of David's quail and star anise, lamb with cumin crust, crabs in ginger, and strawberry mille-feuille with elderflower sorbet. • 2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E)

Delmonico's

Eat with the Big Boys at this sprawling, beautifully restored New York City icon. Start the feast the way Diamond Jim would have, with oysters Rockefeller and clams Casino, and end it with baked Alaska; in between there's Lobster Newberg, rack of lamb, and, of course, the classic Delmonico's steak. And don't forget your jacket—or your wallet. • 56 Beaver St. (212-509-1144). (E)

Gigino Trattoria

It's on such a wide and wind-whipped street that in the winter it's almost too painful to get out of the taxi. But on the other side of Gigino's door, its rustic embrace melts people into puddles of relief and gratitude. Gigino's is a true hideaway, a place you bring friends to watch them relish an old-fashioned lusty pizzaiola sauce over a lustier grilled prime rib, or a chicken scapariello remorselessly uncouth with garlic. • 323 Greenwich St. (212-213-1112). (M)

★ Montrachet

No matter how many more restaurants the indefatigable Drew Nieporent has up his sleeve, this one's his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. The wine list is killer. • 239 W. Broadway (212-219-2777). (E)

★ The Odeon

There is something so confidently sophisticated about the Odeon, so effortlessly head-on-its-shoulders about the way it looks and pulses with energy. It is one of the few rooms in town where maturity feels like fun. And the kitchen delivers a brasserie menu that is virtually mistakeproof, and there's not a velvet rope in sight. You may find hotter places in New York, but you won't find a smarter one. • 145 W. Broadway (212-233-0507). (M)

Omen

Step off this quiet SoHo side street, and you're suddenly transported to Kyoto—a feeling that's reinforced by the traditional menu and decorative calligraphy and ceramics. • 113 Thompson St. (212-925-8923). (M-E) AE only

★ Quartino

All that separates this rustic Italian osteria and wine bar from the South Street Seaport is a few short blocks and



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one major mind-set. It's all about the good life, Italian-style, which of course involves wine, served by the mini-carafe; delectable cured meats and imported cheeses; pasta; pizza; strong espresso; and convivial conversation. But amazingly, no smoking. The owners may be Italian, but they're also doctors. • 21 Peck Slip (212-349-4433). (I-M)

Roc

Rocco Cadolini brings his native Sorrento cuisine to this romantic TriBeCa corner, where traditionalists will recognize the trio marinato: home-cured salmon, swordfish, and white anchovies. Shaped but not bound by tradition, chef Roberto Aita dresses lamb chops in a potato crust, stuffs ravioli with pulled oxtail and serves them with crisp thick-cut bacon. • 190A Duane St. (212-625-3333). (M-E)

Below 14th Street, East

★ Bar Veloce

An early proponent of the tiny Italian sandwich, Bar Veloce squeezes considerable style and substance into a small space where well-crafted panini and tramezzini are washed down with easy-drinking wines that mostly sell for less than \$10 a glass. • 175 Second Ave. (212-260-3200). (I)

★ Gotham Bar & Grill

What began with an unfocused menu of Americana in a raucous eighties-style grand café has mellowed over two decades into a trusted classic with Alfred Portale relentlessly pursuing perfection in the kitchen. Settle into a cocoon of confident service—informal but informed, friendly but unintrusive. Then, depending on the season and the market, rediscover Portale's discipline in a lush truffle-oil-perfumed risotto with caramelized sweet turnips, duck confit, and savory cabbage. Or in a rustic and garlicky white-bean soup with floats of rabbit confit and wilted greens. Or in seared yellowfin propped alongside pappardelle rolled around caponata in which each vegetable is like a jewel. • 12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (E)

★ Jewel Bako

The façade of this tiny East Village jewel box of a restaurant references those forbidding midtown restaurant-cum-clubs with Japanese-only clientele, but the welcome from owner Jack Lamb and his wife, Grace, couldn't be warmer. The snug 24-seat dining room is clad in dramatic bamboo arches that lead back to the six-seat sushi bar, where unsung chef Tatsuya Nagata reigns over a piscatory realm of rarities like Japanese spotted sardines and ark-shell clams. • 239 E. 5th St. (212-979-1012). (M-E)

Le Souk

On a rapidly gentrifying Alphabet City block, two Egyptian brothers have carved out their own North African niche and accessorized it with Moroccan tile, glowing lanterns, and a weatherproofed garden. A Moroccan chef oversees a menu of assorted tajines and couscous, and meze like grilled octopus. Linger long enough to smoke a hookah and admire the belly dancer. • 47 Ave. B (212-777-5454). (I-M)

Osso Buco

Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. • 88 University Pl. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M)

★ Prune

There's not a wrinkled plum in sight. But chef Gabrielle Hamilton's childhood nickname indicates the sort of unpretentious home cooking at which she excels, a grab bag of eccentric, multicultural influences that is, at heart, American—as any place whose quirky bar menu includes Triscuits alongside serrano ham with fresh figs must be. The menu gives as prominent placement to vegetables like creamed corn and roasted beets as to the more entrée-ish capon on a savory garlic crouton, or the pastrami duck breast with a rye-flavored, fried-shallot omelet. • 54 E. 1st St. (212-677-6221). (M)

★ Strip House

The Glazier Group and chef David Walzog, the same team responsible for Michael Jordan's steakhouse and our slightly lower life expectancy, take a Gallic approach to the New York steakhouse with starters like a five-ounce foie gras torchon and sides like goose-fat

potatoes and truffled cream spinach. (Try ordering that at Gallagher's.) Meanwhile, designer David Rockwell has given the space a saucy new look to go with its naughty new name. • 13 E. 12th St. (212-328-0000). (M-E)

Telephone Bar & Grill

This lively East Village fixture was serving classic pub grub like shepherd's pie and fish and chips long before anyone thought of British comfort food as trendy. • 149 Second Ave. (212-529-5000). (I-M)

Below 14th Street, West

Alfama

The family-reunion feel of the welcome you receive when you set foot inside this cozy corner of Portugal in the Village sets the mood. And chef Carmen Santos, a onetime fado singer, seals the deal with authentic dishes like a luscious seafood mariscada, codfish soufflé, and an oddly delicious shellfish bread pudding with tiger prawns. Bonus points for an interesting Portuguese wine list and live fado music on Wednesdays. • 551 Hudson St. (212-645-2500). (M-E)

Burrito Loco

The house burrito comes with three sauces and a choice of beef, pork, or chicken. There's a rendition stuffed with roasted lamb, another with a chipotle-spiked tomatillo salsa, and lots of vegetarian options. And even though it could probably survive just by serving the hordes of marauding college students nachos and tacos, the festive cantina keeps things interesting with cactus salad and shrimp seiche. • 166 W. 4th St. (212-675-1977). (I-M)

Cafe Alyss

If Cafe Alyss seems like a fish out of water, located among all those late-night Village falafel stands and slice joints, that's only fitting. The specialty here is seafood, creatively prepared from quality ingredients. Try pan-seared dry sea scallops with sweet onion purée, and don't skip dessert. The \$9.99 brunch is a particularly good deal, even for cash-strapped NYU students. • 222 Thompson St. (212-387-8239). (M-E)

★ Chow Bar

Chief-partner Peter Klein started out cooking at China Grill and El Teddy's, then playacted that spicy Chino-Latino experience into a cross-country consulting gig. Lucky for us, he's settled in the West Village, where he's turning out addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak-frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles. Potent house cocktails fuel a lively crowd, which seems ecstatic to have found such a fun, quasi-exotic neighborhood place. • 230 W. 4th St. (212-633-2212). (M)

★ Da Silvano

Few of the fervent regulars—including the city's media, fashion, and art-world elite—seem to recall an Italian restaurant whose menu wasn't sopping in red sauce before Da Silvano. The roasted standing duck is crackling, the lamb tender and moist, the artichoke salad brash. And not an eggplant-parmigiana hero in sight. • 260 Sixth Ave. (212-982-2343). (M-E)

★ Mary's Fish Camp

Here's a tip for anyone who's ever paced up and down Cornelia Street waiting for a vacant stool at Pearl Oyster Bar: Now there are two West Village sources for world-class lobster rolls, silken clam chowder, herb-stuffed whole fish, and extended sidewalk pacing. One of Pearl's chef-partners left to open this sunny corner spot equipped with a curved stainless-steel counter and ten tiny tables. • 246 W. 4th St. (646-486-2185). (M)

Monte's

Since 1918, this Village trattoria has weathered the nouvelle-Italian storms and the coming of Mario Batali and continues to serve old-world fare amid cafés that predate Starbucks. All the familiar bases are covered, from pasta in brodo and zuppa di pesce to chicken parmigiana, tortellini alla romana, and on Mondays, osso buco alla Milanese. • 97 Macdougal St. (212-228-9194). (M)

★ Peanut Butter & Co.

Smooth or chunky is only the beginning: Savor the sticky stuff 21 different ways at this kitschy café, where you're transported back to elementary school with one bite of "ants on a log," celery sticks slathered with the peanut butter of your choice and studded with raisins. Request your Elvis (grilled peanut butter, banana, honey, bacon) on whole wheat if you must, though we're

certain the King would disapprove. • 240 Sullivan St. (212-677-3995). (I-M)

Sushi Samba 7

Co-chefs Eiji Takase and Michael Cressotti bring their innovative Latino-Japanese seviches, samba rolls, and sashimi to a Sheridan Square offshoot big enough to handle the caipirinha-fueled overflow from their Gramercy flagship. There's a sunken cocktail lounge, an oyster bar, and a bold new Brazilian accent, especially in the churrasco a' Rio Grande: a feijoada-inspired fantasy of beef, pork, quail, sausage, rice, beans, greens, and farofa. • 87 Seventh Ave. So. (212-691-7885). (M)

Tio Pepe

Can't decide between Mexican and Spanish? This Greenwich Village kitchen has been doling out both for over three decades, and to judge by the liquor supply, the bar's been stocking a new brand of tequila every year. That sort of variety contributes to the general merriment, as do a heaping paella Valenciana and bi-cultural tapas like garlic shrimp and nachos, which many seem to enjoy in the skylit garden room. • 168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I-M)

14th-42nd Streets, East Side

Andreas Brick Oven Ristorante

Affordable Italian fare in a warm and woody setting. Lobster ravioli, osso buco, and linguine fra diavolo are served in individual or family-size portions, and the thin-crust brick-oven pizza comes any way you like. • 307 Third Ave., nr. 23rd St. (212-779-2125). (I-M)

Artisanal

If cheese is a religion, this is its bustling, Balthazar-gone-midtown house of worship. After an olfactory assault at the door, where you're hit with the pungent aroma of Muenster, Taleggio, and 200 other varieties aging gracefully in the boutique cheese cave, indulge in full-fromage festivities from appetizer (raclette pizza) to dessert (a splendid tarte Tatin with a cheese-infused crust.) If you manage to resist a dozen different fondues, there's a full menu of bistro classics like braised lamb shank, boudin blanc, and cassoulet. If not, feed your Appenzeller addiction at the retail cheese counter, which also carries crusty loaves of Balthazar Bakery bread. • 2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (212-725-8585). (M-E)

Bambou

A hint of the tropics on 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry amid a relaxing, palm-fronded bar and dining room. • 243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M)

★ Beppe

Cesare Casella's devoted fans know him for his Tuscan cooking and his signature breast-pocket herb bouquet, both of which have resurfaced at this Gramercy trattoria. You'll also find an instant coziness, a pride of rustic Tuscan products stashed behind glass at the entrance, the warmth of a giant open fireplace. Casella's cozze are plump and sweet in a fiery broth; chewy handmade pinci noodles in walnut-tomato sauce are a triumph. We love braised black cabbage in toasted Tuscan bread, savory braised spare ribs, and desserts like sensational lemon "pudding" with candied orange peel. • 45 E. 22nd St. (212-982-8422). (E)

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel

Commuters and business travelers can enter this formal hotel restaurant from Grand Central Terminal, for a quick drink or a full meal from the French-influenced American menu. • 42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M-E)

★ Craft

Tom Colicchio is a chef with a mission, two jobs, and what must be a crackerjack support team. When he's not supervising the three-star kitchen at Gramercy Tavern, he's reducing cooking (or elevating it, depending on your point of view) to its most basic elements, a tactic that works only when the ingredients are of the highest possible quality, procured from small family farms and artisanal producers. At his first solo venture, literally around the corner from Gramercy and similarly elegant, he and his chef de cuisine, Marco Canora, collaborate on a high-concept menu that focuses almost obsessively on raw materials. • 43 E. 19th St. (212-780-0880). (M-E)

Gramercy Tavern

Tavern has become Danny Meyer's most appealing restaurant, with a no-reservations discount bar room to make one churlish for not living or working nearby. Chef Tom Colicchio pairs foods folks crave with elements they usually don't. Roast sirloin of beef comes with braised beef cheeks. Crabmeat fondue contains sea urchin. Not only does each gamble pay off, but so tickled are diners by their nascent daring hat on their next visit, damned if they don't demand weetbreads with Jerusalem artichokes and roasted cod with brussels sprouts. • 42 E. 20th St. (212-477-1777). (M-E)

Heartland Brewery

A rollicking brewpub with a lively outdoor café. Accompany your choice of microbrew with stout-battered onion rings, a buffalo burger, or sesame-crusted

tonk in New York," attracting bikers, families, and music-industry insiders. Try the house-smoked baby back ribs, bison burgers, and Santa Fe hand rolls, or just grab a drink at the horse trailer that's been converted into a bar. • 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500). (I)

Rossini's

This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and accommodates private parties. • 108 E. 38th St. (212-683-0135). (E)

Scopa

This sprawling complex is chef-owner Vincent Scott's brave attempt to minister to every dining need of his LoMad office-worker clientele, from catered breakfast meetings to late-night, Venetian-inspired nibbles at the cicchetti bar, accompanied by Italian

14th-42nd Streets, West Side

Arno

Garment District bigwigs and pre-Garden revelers flock to this lively, upscale northern Italian restaurant. Try reliable classics like veal scaloppine and red snapper sautéed with shrimp and clams, garlic, and white wine. • 141 West 38th St. (212-944-7420). (M-E)

City Bakery

Heavenly tarts, perfectly textured cookies and brownies, luscious lemonades, ultra-thick and creamy hot chocolate—even homemade marshmallows—beckon irresistibly from the checkout counter. Pre-dessert, there are inspired sandwiches like roasted pear and ricotta salata, and the only salad bar we obsess over, plus a breakfast and lunch counter with its own separate menu, and a habit-forming weekend brunch. • 3 W. 18th St. (212-366-1414). (I-M)

Hush

Part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu noshes like Peking-duck pizza and corn-meal-fried shrimp with braised Swiss chard, served in shareable portions. • 17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I-M)

Lotus

Everything you wanted from a trendy club-bar-restaurant and less. Less attitude, less discomfort, less elbow contact, and less forgettable food. Lotus is a blooming surprise. A slight kitschiness keeps it warm. Nice-guy owners keep it friendly. And chef Richard Farnabe keeps you well-fed. Think of the velvet rope outside as a ribbon. And Lotus as a gift. • 409 W. 14th St. (212-243-4420). (M-E)

Ohm

An all-in-one entertainment center offering dinner, dancing, and lounging on velvet furniture. Plus sesame chicken tenders, beef tenderloin shish kebabs, and bay scallops with white wine overangel hair pasta. • 16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M-E)

Restaurant Above

Twenty-ones floors above the to-n'-fro of 42nd Street this handsomely designed hideaway in the Times Square Hilton awaits you, and so does Lutèce veteran Denis Fitzgerald and his first-rate celebration of Americana (with just a few Asian blips). Namely, mignon of yellowfin tuna, a classic Caesar, and lacquered pork chops with cottage-fried sweet potatoes. • 234 W. 42nd St. (212-642-2626). (E)

Simply Pasta

Perfectly situated for preheater, this moderately priced Northern Italian restaurant has a specialty martini list, and offers such dependable, fresh fare as Caesar salad, osso buco, and pastas—over two dozen of them. • 120 W. 41st St. (212-391-0805). (I)

43rd-56th Streets, East Side

Avra

Just as they are uptown at sister restaurant Trata, Fulton Street-fresh whole fish are priced by the pound and described on the menu like wines. *Barounia*, for example, is a "Mediterranean delicacy that tends to be bony but flavorful." Elsewhere on the menu, spinach pie goes Gallic as spanakopita napoleon and grape leaves get an unexpected stuffing of raw salmon, tuna, and cucumber. • 141 E. 48th St. (212-759-8550). (M-E)

D'Artagnan, The Rotisserie

After fifteen years of selling foie gras and game to restaurants, D'Artagnan has opened its own: a narrow, high-ceilinged duplex counterfringed with tiled floors, rough ocher walls, a communal table, and Basque linens. Besides the signature terrines and charcuterie, there's seriously rib-sticking Gascon fare like cassoulet, spit-roasted free-range chicken, and "la garbure et son chabrot," a duck-confit soup dense enough to be eaten with a fork—or drunk in the true Gascon style, directly from the bowl. • 152 E. 46th St. (212-687-0300). (M-E)

Della Femina

It might be easier to score a table here than at the infamous ad man's East Hampton address, but don't read too much into that: the souped-up seasonal American menu tastes just as good in 212. There's a little country and a little city in his cold corn soup with black truf-

Ask Gael

I want to do my bit by eating downtown.

Recovery in the dust zone is still a little spotty, so patriotic pilgrimages are welcome. But the town's culinary troops are already bivouacked at **The Harrison**, the brave front established just north of ground zero by the guys from Red Cat. You'll have to pull strings or book far ahead to join the good-looking patriots eating crusty sweetbreads saltimbocca and grilled Arctic char in a pool of red-wine sauce in the coziness that already makes the room feel like a local hangout. Tonight the hulking pork chop is definitely too dry, and an itsy portion of cavatelli with veal cheek barely fills the Road Food Warrior's own cheek. But it's early yet. The kitchen's getting the feel of the neighborhood. The welcome is huge; the wait staff, well-drilled. And the pumpkin tart veers triumphantly into delicate creaminess. (355 Greenwich Street; 212-274-9310.)



ahi tuna. The beer-weary can sample from the city's largest selection of tequilas and single-malt scotches. • 35 Union Square W. (212-645-3400). Also, 1285 Sixth Ave. at 51st St. (582-8244). (I-M)

Meli Melo

This cheerful neighborhood spot offers a very reasonable fixed-price dinner—\$31.50 for four courses. The seafood-heavy French menu has Asian and Mediterranean touches in dishes like seared tuna with baby bok choy and rack of lamb with couscous. • 110 Madison Ave., nr. 29th St. (212-686-5551). (M)

Rodeo Bar & Grill

This place bills itself as "the longest-running honky-

wines by the glass, carafe, or bottle. Not to mention a bustling takeout shop, he-man rib steaks, scrumptious pastas, and a grilled pizza that would make his mentors at Providence's Al Forno proud. • 79 Madison Ave., near 28th St. (212-686-8787). (M-E)

Slate

At Manhattan's first billiards club-cum-full-service restaurant, poolside dining means contemporary Middle Eastern specialties—a "Mediterranean raw bar" plate with fava-bean-horseradish sauce, mini kuffeh pockets, and tangerine-glazed chicken—amid all the action from the 34 pool tables. • 54 West 21st St. (212-989-0096). (I-M)

file coulis, and Dover sole "fish sticks" with a caviar remoulade. And you can almost smell Georgica beach in the lobster roll. • 131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (E)

Divine Bar

This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found unwinding. • 244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). Also, 55 Liberty St., second floor (791-9463). (I-M)

Giambelli 50th Ristorante

Upscale Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as careful. • 46 E. 50th St. (212-688-2760). (M)

La Mangeoire

A bit of Provence in midtown. This rustic French country restaurant featuring hearty fare like Mediterranean fish soup with rouille and rabbit fricassé in a mustard tarragon sauce is a boon for a neighborhood otherwise lacking in savoir fare. • 1008 Second Ave., nr. 53rd St. (212-759-7086). (M)

★ Lespinasse

Old-fashioned, luxurious hotel dining is not everyone's idea of fun these days—even with the possibility of a noontime flirtation and posh hotel rooms so handy. But chef Christian Delouvrier's cooking is anything but a bore. His butternut squash soup is revved up with chunks of duck breast and crusty foie gras, lamb rack and loin is touched with Chartreuse and coffee, and baby pig with cassoulet is carefully sauced. With inventive cooking like this, even the recently redone room—so French when it ought to be robber-baron American—seems pleasantly mellowed. • 2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E)

★ Maloney & Porcelli

Maloney & Porcelli claims it isn't a steakhouse, but the tide of pinstripe and hunks of food suggest otherwise. The best meat dish, though, isn't steak but a mammoth "crackling" pork shank—which arrives with a steak knife thrust deep into it—and the service couldn't be nicer. • 37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E)

★ Métrazur

Given the location and prime people-watching potential, we'd happily munch Cheez-Its on Grand Central Terminal's spectacularly restored East Balcony. Thanks to Charlie Palmer and his seasonal American menu, we don't have to. Instead, there's white-bean flatbread, raw shellfish platters, and fire-roasted lobster, with views of both the open kitchen and the star-studded ceiling. • Grand Central Terminal (212-687-4600). (M-E)

Monkey Bar

Many talented chefs have made their way through this kitchen, which, in its latest incarnation under new executive chef David Walzog, is looking back to its all-American roots with entrées like butter-poached Maine lobster, New York strip steak, and seasonal sides like sweet corn succotash and sugar snap peas. David Rockwell's swanky design and the monkey-muraled bar remain unchanged—plush in an Old New York way. • 60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E)

Nino's Positano

Upscale Italian specializing in food from the south, Positano in particular. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. • 890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M)

One 51

A 1920s opera-house-turned-twenty-first-century nightclub, with weekly theme nights like Latin Tuesdays. And should all that dancing make you hungry, the kitchen offers polyglot-American tapas and prix-fixe dinners, incorporating global flavors in everything from "semi-sushi" salmon with wasabi cream and ginger, to slow-roasted duck breast with cantaloupe glaze and polenta. • 151 E. 50th St. (212-753-1144). (M-E)

★ Oyster Bar

Unperturbed by the arriviste competition in the food court next door, the jewel of the pre-renovation Termini-

nal continues to serve superlative pan roasts and clam chowders, and an overwhelming assortment of oysters. The sprawling subterranean space has the hustle-bustle of a cafeteria, but don't be fooled—you pay for the privilege of eating under that vaulted tile ceiling. • Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M-E)

Rothmann's Steakhouse & Grill

A sophisticated steakhouse with something for everyone, from "Asian-fried calamari" and "West Coast chicken" to the \$132 porterhouse for four. Carnivores are in good hands—those of Christopher Hollis, fresh from Les Halles. • 3 E. 54th St. (212-319-5500). (E)

Smith & Wollensky

Urban cowboys herd together over big steaks with



where, from the duxelles to the mashed potatoes—and the smaller café up front has its own extensive plat, ranging from oyster pie with salsify and leeks to steak-frites. In true French style, the roast chicken is carved at tableside. But McNally's still trying for something casual: "You can just come into the front room for a drink if you want," he assures, and alcohol prices are relatively friendly. As for the name, it's a nod to McNally's roots, a reference to the working-class hero of the sixties British film *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*—and "the most ordinary name I could think of." (64 East 1st Street; 212-246-3268.)

BETH LANDMAN KEIL

knives to match at impresario Alan Stillman's signature chophouse. The place has that landmark-steakhouse look—bare oak floors, a raffish air, and bustling waiters wearing service stars. There's surf and turf aplenty, improvisations at lunch, and an enviable wine cellar. • 797 Third Ave., at 49th St. (212-753-1530). (M-E)

43rd-56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne

Maybe you're not an out-of-towner on a spending spree, but you can pretend to be at this posh hotel restaurant. Chef Oliver Dudler's modern French menu changes seasonally, and incorporates to-be-expected luxury ingredients like lobster (in a salad with braised mango), foie gras (with beet sorbet), and roasted Colorado rack of lamb. The \$50 prix fixe dinner is a (relative) steal. • 700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M-E)

★ Baldoria

Everyone at Frank Pellegrino Jr.'s Baldoria toils to make sure customers stay happy enough to sing along with Jimmy Roselli on the jukebox. There's luscious veal scallopini, aromatic spaghetti with clams, a raw bar upstairs, and best of all, 136 seats. So, if you still can't get into Rao's—Junior's father's legendary celebrity hangout—now you don't have to. • 249 W. 49th St. (212-582-0460). (E)

Ben Benson's Steak House

This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. At a time when steakhouses were famous for rudeness and hauteur, Benson's made a point of homeliness. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entirely to the consumption of prime aged beef and steakhouse standards. • 123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E)

Benihana

Long before *Iron Chef* taught us just how quick-hand-

ed knife-wielding Japanese cooks can be, there were the tableside cooking shows that are still the main draw at this teppanyaki steakhouse. Kids, of course, love it. • 47 W. 56th St. (212-581-0930). (E)

Cascina

The communal farmhouse tables and equally rustic house wines, imported from the owner's Northern Italian vineyard, conspire to make this trattoria feel more Tuscan countryside than Hell's Kitchen storefront. Beyond lasagne and minestrone, the menu surprises with dishes like rabbit casserole in a bread crust barbecued veal ribs, and whole-wheat pizza with smoked salmon and cream cheese. • 647 9th Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-245-4422). (M)

Opening

East Ender

It's been eleven years since Brian McNally opened '44,' his last restaurant in New York, but every one he's helmed since the Odeon in 1980 (with brother Keith) has been a smash. At Smith, his newest place, the menu in the 85-seat back room is full of hearty bistro food, like roast duck breast with artichoke spaetzle and mustard greens—chef Kenny Addington, who's worked at '44' and Patroon, seems to scatter truffles every-

★ Christer's

No, Swedish food isn't all about salmon. But we'd be disconsolate if Christer Larsson ever stopped serving his archetypical oak-board-baked filet. And even though he acquires himself well with the compulsory gravlax and herring, he's a gifted cook who borrows freely from other culinary styles. The cozy décor, on the other hand, is David Rockwell's riff on a Scandinavian hunting lodge, with copper fish "scales," a glowing fireplace, rough-hewn walls, and Marimekko colors. • 145 W. 55th St. (212-974-7224). (E)

Cité

Ambassador of beef Alan Stillman cops a French accent at this soaring midtown steakhouse known for its wine dinners. Meat is just the hard core of the menu, a document that also includes pan-roasted salmon "choucroute," grilled chicken merguez sausage, and desserts big enough for two or more to share. For more casual dining, try the Cité Grill next door. • 120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M-E)

Da Rosina

Those with curtains to make and bellies to fill find just what they're looking for in this Restaurant Row standby, a reliable source for homemade pasta, chicken and veal cutlets every which way, and Italian classics from fried clams to tiramisu. A \$22 prix fixe dinner and \$13.95 lunch make it easy to splurge on affordable indulgences like spicy lobster frutti di mare and broiled sirloin steak. • 342 W. 46th St. (212-977-7373). (M)

★ DB Bistro Moderne

Daniel Boulud's latest venture is supposed to be an homage to the simple bistro foods of his youth, but the great chef can't help making things fancy. Take boeuf en gelée, which Chef Boulud coats with sweet horseradish cream and serves in a dainty parfait glass. Or the \$27 "DB Burger," leavened with foie gras and short ribs and a silver cup of pommes soufflées on the side. The space can feel a little hectic around theater time,

but elbow your way in if you can. • 55 W. 44th St. (212-391-2400). (E)

★ Del Frisco's

Want to see what mahogany fashioned by testosterone looks like? This is without question the most urbane steakhouse you will ever see, its meat locker filled with terrific beef. From the usually overrated filet mignon, whose buttery blandness gets surmounted by a brash pepper-splattered crust, to the superb 26-ounce "double eagle" strip, Del Frisco's is a silverware-clanking crowd pleaser. • 1221 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-575-5129). (E)

★ Le Bernardin

Criticizing Le Bernardin is like analyzing rainbows. Just try to describe the snapper in coconut milk or the black bass with truffles and celery root. Submit to the sorcery of chef Eric Ripert, the bewitchery of owner and co-creator Maguy Le Coze, and experience the thrilling sensation of having everything perfect. • 155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E)

Martini's

Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing sidewalk café and rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. • 810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M)

Randolph's

Housed in the Warwick Hotel—which William Randolph Hearst built for his mistress, Marion Davies—this cozy restaurant and lounge has a lush, old-world feel and an eclectic menu, from dim sum to a filet mignon sandwich. • 65 W. 54th St. (212-247-2700). (M-E)

St. Andrews

In what might be New York's only full-fledged Scottish restaurant, the bartenders wear kilts, the scotch is single-malt, and the décor revolves around pictures of famous golf courses. The hearty steak-and-seafood menu features rack of lamb and brook trout stuffed with crabmeat and Irish oatmeal in a scotch-whiskey sauce. • 120 W. 44th St. (212-840-8413). (I-M)

Swing 46

Why boogie to Benny Goodman in the solitude of your own home, when you can whoop it up with like-minded big-band fans at the only all-swing dinner dance club in town? Free dance lessons nightly, plus a crash course at brunch, and an \$18.95 prix fixe, pre-theater dinner that offers choices like herb-crusted strip steak and roast chicken with sage stuffing. • 349 W. 46th St. (212-262-9554). (M)

★ Town

A delightful sensation takes over the moment you descend into Town—that all too infrequent feeling when you know you're going to be glad you came. From a front desk actually focused on you to a room aglow in plush, sleek romanticism, Town revels in being all grown up. But the real forte is chef-owner Geoffrey Zakarian, who, eschewing gimmicks like chili peppers

from around the world, prepares subtle, sophisticated dishes like tuna in ramp-and-sea-urchin sauce, and duck steak with buckwheat pilaf. • 15 W. 56th St. (212-582-4445). (M-E)

Zanzibar

The crowd at this loungey Hell's Kitchen restaurant is as eclectic as the menu. African, Arabic, Asian, and Mediterranean touches appear in dishes like tuna and ginger ravioli; mussel soup with garlic, chickpeas, and cilantro; and a root vegetable and peanut stew served over rice. • 645 Ninth Ave. nr. 45th St. (212-957-9197). (M)

57th-60th Streets

★ Alain Ducasse at the Essex House

The epitome of posh, from the decorous welcome to the postprandial lollipop cart, Ducasse's American outpost has found its groove. And even if a \$160 dinner doesn't become a weekly habit, the extravagantly Art Deco cocoon of a room should be experienced at least once, as should the obsessively seasonal menus, the cheese course, and the high-concept wine list. The twice-weekly \$65 lunch is, relatively speaking, a steal. • 155 W. 58th St. (212-265-7300). (E)

Caviarteria

If you like to sip Taittinger and nibble caviar by the eighth of an ounce on a whim, this is the place for you. The casually elegant café also offers sampler platters of Sevruga, Osetra, and Beluga, plus related luxuries like a black-truffle soup, smoked trout from Idaho, salmon from Scotland, and a host of roe-centric sandwiches. • 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-759-7410). (M-E)

★ Felidia

In between writing cookbooks and taping segments of her TV show, Lidia Bastianich, the matriarch of the clan responsible in part for Lupa, Esca, and Becco, oversees this elegant bastion of Italian cooking. But chef Fortunato Nicotra deserves credit: Sauces are lighter, pastas still wonderful, and entrees get deftly tweaked. The wine list always impresses, and olive oil connoisseurs can spring for a \$7 tasting. • 243 E. 58th St. (212-758-1479). (E)

Gabriel's Bar & Restaurant

Just four blocks from Lincoln Center, this acclaimed Northern Italian favorite of theatergoers and neighborhood regulars is unintimidatingly comfortable and culinarily sophisticated at the same time. Hearty dishes include gnocchi in duck ragu, braised short ribs with a semolina custard, and wood-grilled tuna with fresh horseradish. The hot chocolate has a cult following. • 11 W. 60th St. (212-956-4600). (M-E)

The Manhattan Ocean Club

Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics. A pictorial menu features a dozen or so smiley-faced fish. Preparations range from classic (Dover sole meunière) to creative (grouper with roasted pineapple and black peppercorns). Or have the chef prepare your fish any way you like. • 57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E)

ONEc.p.s.

Alan Stillman, along with executive chef David Burke and designer Adam Tihany, has rewired the Plaza's Edwardian Room. Tihany has colored the oaken walls caramel and put huge scarlet lampshades on the chandeliers, and the irrepressible Burke has concocted a whimsical menu that includes a foie gras-spiked burger and a rack of lamb accompanied by shepherd's pie. The mosaic floors and ceiling remain untouched, and the view of Central Park is as grand as ever. • 1 Central Pk. So. (212-583-1111). (E)

★ Shelly's New York

The latest Shelly Fireman production inhabits an old Automat space, ergo the "Horn & Hardart" creamed spinach and macaroni and cheese. Only the assimilative Fireman (of Brooklyn Diner fame) would offer towering shellfish platters and stone crabs flown in daily from Joe's in Miami Beach alongside miso-glazed halibut, chicken schnitzel, and a 50-ounce porterhouse steak cooked "Brooklyn style" and make it all work. • 104 W. 57th St. (212-245-2422). (M-E)

Above 60th Street, East Side

The Boathouse in Central Park

Claim a table by a flowery umbrella on the pondside deck and give thanks to Frederick Olmsted and generations of park champions for preserving this precious greenery. The American menu leans toward fresh seafood like pan-roasted monkfish with spring onions and garlic confit, and seared wild striped bass. • E. 72nd St. and Park Drive N. (212-517-2233). (M-E)

Dalga

Greece isn't the only country with a Mediterranean coast, but it's managed to corner the market on simply prepared seafood. Now, though, Milos and its ilk have competition from Dalga (Turkish for "wave"). A daily assortment of fresh fish, seafood and vegetable stews, and meze like zucchini pancakes and creamy yogurt blended with spinach and walnuts will be a revelation for anyone whose familiarity with Turkish cuisine begins and ends with the doner kebab (a.k.a. gyro). • 401 E. 62nd St. (212-813-1790). (M)

★ Daniel

Daniel Boulud is blessed with the gift of being able to add familiar flavors into the most stunning of summations, like walnuts and foie gras that intensify the lush gaminess of quail. He routinely triumphs in why-didn't-anyone-else-think-of-it feats like sweetbreads without that heady aftertaste—suspending them between a rhubarb glaze and spinach purée. His chocolate bombe soars like no other. • 60 E. 65th St. (212-288-0033). (E)

Emo's

This spiffy spot hopes to give the neighborhood's plethora of sushi bars and Chinese takeouts some much-needed competition by introducing Upper East Siders to the kimchee-spiked pleasures of Korean cooking. Savory scallion pancakes called paman come with calamari, scallops, and shrimp; tofu-stuffed dumplings are adeptly pan-fried. The menu features bibimbop and all sorts of seafood, but none of that participatory grill-your-own barbecue, which should ensure a smoke-free evening. • 1564 Second Ave., near 81st St. (212-628-8699). (M)

★ Etats-Unis

Behold a small, square, dramatic, and spartan room, devoid of any table-hopping, cell phones, or change-of-life blondes. The daily-changing menu choices are spare, but consistent in their bent towards slow roasting, robust sauces, and great vegetables. Nota bene—be wary the local intellectuals who cleave to this place. "We're all living in the world's history," one actually said one night. Maybe it would've sounded better spoken into a cell phone. • 242 E. 81st St. (212-517-8826). (E)

★ JoJo

This is where it all began, where Jean-Georges Vong-

Takeout Hunt Club

It isn't all caviar and foie gras at the **Petrossian Boutique** these days. Through December 31, chef David Cunningham is also larding the display case with all kinds of robust dishes featuring wild game. Some are based on his Scottish grandmother's recipes, like a plump juniper-laced wood-pigeon pie brimming with pungent, flavorful morsels of meat, brandy-soaked raisins, mushrooms, and forcemeat balls (\$45; serves eight to ten people; or \$12 for a pie, pictured, that serves one to two). There's also a galantine of mallard duckling with foie gras and black truffles (\$25 per pound), and a spicy rabbit stew revved up with paprika (\$15 per pound), perhaps hearkening back to the chef's hunting days in the wilds of Connecticut. Just remember to wear your Barbour jacket—the one with the big, never-before-used game pocket in the back. (911 Seventh Avenue, near 57th Street; 212-245-2217.)



gerichten stunned gourmands with his herbal essences, vegetable sauces, and gossamer desserts. The once-staid townhouse has been rendered nearly unrecognizable with a fin de siècle French-bordello remake and a hip-hop soundtrack, but in his reigning wisdom, the megachef still lets them eat cake—specifically, his signature molten Valrhona-chocolate masterpiece. • 160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E)

Mark's

Decked out like a private London club, with plump, tasseled pillows. Fine French-American cooking (torchon of foie gras with cranberry-kumquat compote, pan-roasted lobster with Armagnac jus), award-winning wine list, and a Willy Wonka-worthy chocolate

Student's League, gave him a few years at Princeton, and financed his *Wanderjahr* abroad, he might come home and open the Post House. It's clubby but not snooty, with a Christo here and a Twombly there, and a well-traveled menu that includes everything from a Cajun rib steak to venison osso buco. • 28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E)

Sel & Poivre

Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, country-fied space. The country-French cuisine includes steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. • 853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M)

The Underground Gourmet

The Men in Blue

Ever since "health food" became two dirty words, practitioners of that much-maligned cuisine have struggled to come up with some alternative way to describe food that's tasty, good for you, and made of processed wheat gluten. It isn't easy: The best that Gabriel Pellegrini can do is "urban hippie," a phrase he borrowed from a customer at **Melissa Blue**, his friendly new restaurant and bar opposite the Kips Bay multiplex. Pellegrini and chef de cuisine Scott Baber rework traditional food in untraditional ways, substituting turkey for veal in a revisionist osso buco, and chicken for beef in a cheese steak sandwich. Seitan and soy products show up where you'd least expect them—most convincingly inside spicy vegetarian "buffalo wings" served with celery sticks and blue-cheese dressing. But Baber, who used to cook at Home, relies less on Fakin' Bacon than on fresh fish, mostly local and organic produce, and elegant presentation in dishes like his crispy herbed salmon with roasted new potatoes, garlic spinach, and cilantro yogurt (entrées, \$9.95 to \$15.95). Since you'd never suspect your tempting plate of being *health food* if you weren't on Melissa Blue's casual, pillow-strewn premises or in its winterized garden room, you can soften the ugly truth by dipping into the refreshingly affordable, food-friendly wine list, which includes a handful of selections culled from New York vineyards. Or sample one of the fruity sake sangrías, sure to appeal to any urban hippie. (575 Second Avenue, near 32nd Street; 212-481-4844.)



tea. • 25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E)

Nino's

Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. • 1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E)

★ Park Avenue Cafe

A polished, contrived American café for business lunches and get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the neighbors rapt with signature dishes like salmon pastrami with crushed pepper. • 100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E)

★ Payard Patisserie & Bistro

You'll never shiver and blush the way François Payard's Notre Dame, Fontainebleau, St.-Honoré, or devilish chocolate tart make you when they hijack your taste buds. If all this sweetness weren't enough, Payard's chef Philippe Bertineau concocts first and second courses that match François's touted thirds. • 1032 Lexington Ave., nr. 73rd St. (212-717-5252). (M-E)

★ The Post House

How grand can a steakhouse get? If you took a meat-and-potatoes guy who liked to hang out at the Art

Seventh Regiment Mess

Who knew that you can actually eat dinner on the fourth floor of the Armory, a brick-walled fortress, originally decorated by Louis Comfort Tiffany and Stanford White? A hunting-lodge motif provides the proper historical backdrop for a moderately priced menu of pastas, salads, sautéed chicken, rack of lamb, and a sandwich quaintly called the "dagwood." • 643 Park Ave., at 66th St. (212-744-4107). (I-M)

Above 60th Street, West Side

★ A

This barbershop turned four-table café has been outfitted with a big blue A in the window and what might be the world's tiniest professional kitchen: two hot plates, a mini-fridge, a sink, and a cutting board. Chef-owner Marc Solomon (who used to run Red Stripe and Les Deux Lapins downtown) uses that space to maximum effect cooking simple, inventive Jamaican-inspired French dishes like curried lamb pie with coconut crème fraîche and pan-fried ackee-and-callaloo crêpes. • 947 Columbus Ave., nr. 106th St. (212-531-1643). (I)

Corner

A nicely appointed neighborhood restaurant as invit-

ing as its name and the warm glow from its copper sconces. Chef Maurice Hurley's pleasing, something-for-everyone menu includes grilled smoked sausage, Atlantic salmon, and Vietnamese duck with linguine and sambal. • 461 Columbus Ave., at 82nd St. (212-875-1619). (M)

★ La Flor de Broadway

There's more to making a good Cuban sandwich than throwing some ham and cheese on a roll, tossing it onto the sandwich press, and twiddling your thumbs until it's ready. Harlem's La Flor earns its nickname, "El Rey del Sandwich Cubano," by meticulously basting the bun while the sandwich cooks in the press and generally lavishing attention on the thing as if it were a Thanksgiving turkey. The result is perfectly thin and crispy outside, and juicy within. • 3401 Broadway, at 138th St. (212-926-4190). (I) (\$)

Max SoHa

This charming offshoot of Max, the perennially cramped East Village trattoria, has settled in a previously broccoli-rabe-bereft Morningside Heights neighborhood. The cooking—hearty rigatoni with meatballs and Italian sausage, toasted garlic bread with anchovies, osso buco—is as good as it is at Max downtown, so, at least until the competition arrives, you can take your waiter's word for it when he announces that this is the best tirami su around. • 1274 Amsterdam Ave., at 123rd St. (212-531-2221). (I-M) (\$)

★ Oust

After cultivating a coterie of foodie followers at places like Alison on Dominick and Cascabel, Tom Valenti brings his distinctive style of boldly layered flavors—and those lamb shanks—to a neighborhood legendarily short on sophisticated grub. Clearly, he's doing his darndest to turn the tide with reprises of old favorites like potato, goat cheese, and truffle terrine with transcendent beets; and lusty short rib on an ooze of polenta perfumed with smoked onions. • 2315 Broadway, near 84th St. (212-580-8700). (M-E)

★ Picholine

Terrance Brennan doesn't want to be the Upper West Side's best chef. He's got the whole city in his sights, which explains why his French-Mediterranean menu aspires to such lofty heights. Rustic nightly specials like cassoulet and seven-hour lamb shank are earthy counterpoint to menu selections like sea-urchin panna cotta and truffle-steeped poached halibut. The wild-mushroom-and-duck risotto has its own fan club, as does fromager Max McCalman. • 35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E)

Scaletta

A dining room decorated in muted blues and pinks serves hearty Italian fare. Conveniently located across the street from those famous dinosaurs at the Museum of Natural History. • 50 W. 77th St. (212-769-9191). (M)

Brooklyn

★ L&B Spumoni Gardens

If you're a sucker for nostalgia and a connoisseur of Sicilian pizza, you'll love this Bensonhurst landmark where locals and pizza pilgrims line up for the signature square pie (a light, crunchy crust, adorned with a bare minimum of mozzarella cheese beneath a layer of tangy tomato sauce) and a paper cup of the frozen house specialty. • 2725 86th St. (718-449-1230). (I)

Queens

★ Mombar

An artist at heart, chef-owner Moustafa El Sayed designed and built this sort of Alice-in-Arabian-Wonderland dedicated to Egyptian clay-pot cookery, where teacups protrude from walls, and tabletops double as canvases. And El Sayed is as creative with food as he is with paint and tile. Try the meze plate, or the egga, a sort of Egyptian frittata, and then move on to El Sayed's raison d'être, the all-encompassing clay pot, which might be filled with stewed rabbit, lamb tajine, or chicken and olives. • 25-22 Steinway St. (718-726-2356). (M)

Classical & Dance

Classical Music

New York Philharmonic

ván Fischer guest-conducts Schumann's Cello Concerto, featuring Lynn Harrell, and Mahler's Symphony No. 5. 12/11 at 7:30. Leonard Slatkin leads excerpts from Wynton Marsalis's *All Rise* and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* suite, with movements from the Ellington-Strayhorn version, played by the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. 12/13 and 12/15 and 8, 12/14 at 11; 12/18 at 7:30. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); 19-\$88.

Jarah Cahill, piano

New-music pianist performs Ruth Crawford Seeger's *Preludes* and premieres short works by Pauline Oliveros, Annea Lockwood, Julia Wolfe, Maggi Payne, and others, in tribute to Pete Seeger's mom's centennial. 12/13 at 8. • Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (212-501-3300); \$10.

The Kirov Orchestra

Performs works by Liadov, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, and Stravinsky. 12/13 at 8; all-Rachmaninoff program featuring pianist Vladimir Feltsman, 12/14 at 8; all-Prokofiev program, 12/15 at 8; and Wagner, Debussy, and Tchaikovsky, 12/16 at 3. Valery Gergiev conducts. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); \$29-\$127.

The Manhattan Jazz Philharmonic

New Manhattan School of Music ensemble dedicated to original orchestral works has its debut performance, led by Justin DiCioccio. 12/13 at 8. • Manhattan School of Music, Broadway and 122nd St. (212-749-2802, ext. 4528); free.

The Walter W. Naumburg Foundation

Dawn Upshaw, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, the Emerson String Quartet, the Eroica Trio, and many other Naumburg winners celebrate the foundation's seventh anniversary. 12/13 at 7:30. • Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); \$25.

"Paul Winter's Winter Solstice Celebration!"

For the twenty-second annual concert, Winter brings in new players on African percussion and the Forces of Nature Dance Company for an event that typically draws an interfaith audience of more than 10,000. 12/13-12/14 at 7:30; 12/15 at 2 and 7:30. • Cathedral

of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (212-662-2133); \$29-\$65.

Brooklyn Philharmonic

Presents Skalkottas's *Three Greek Dances*, Bernstein's *Serenade* for Violin and Orchestra (after Plato's *Symposium*), and the premiere of *The Cows of Apollo*. Robert Spano conducts. See essay. 12/14-12/15 at 8. • Brooklyn Academy of Music, Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St. (718-636-4100); \$8-\$50.

People's Symphony Concert

Perfect for the budget-minded music lover, the series presents top-flight chamber music. This week, it's cellist Lynn Harrell performing works by Bach, Debussy, Schubert, Webern, and Chopin. 12/15 at 3. • Washington Irving High School, 16th St. and Irving Pl. (212-586-4680); \$7.50 (or \$23 for five concerts).

The Waverly Consort

Comes to the stunning Cloisters museum for the annual holiday concert drawing on music from various regions of medieval Europe, including liturgy, hymns, and Mass excerpts. 12/15-12/16 at 1 and 3. • The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-650-2290); \$45.

"Holiday Brass"

The New York Philharmonic's Principal Brass Quintet and the Canadian Brass join forces for a high-energy holiday concert. 12/16 at 3. • Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); \$28-\$64.

Dmitri Hvorostovsky, bass-baritone

One of today's top interpreters of Russian vocal music continues Carnegie's *Focus On: Rachmaninoff* series, with music by Tchaikovsky too. 12/16 at 7:30. • Carnegie Hall, Seventh Ave. at 57th St. (212-247-7800); \$20-\$74.

"Prokofiev Marathon"

Complete piano sonatas will be performed by Alexander Toradze, George Vatchnadze, Alexander Korsantia, and students from the Toradze Piano Studio. 12/16 at 7:30. • Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (212-854-7799); \$20.

Opera

Metropolitan Opera

Herbert Wernicke's new production of Strauss's *Die Frau Ohne Schatten*

Edited by Alicia Zuckerman

("The Woman Without a Shadow"), with Deborah Voight as the Empress, premieres 12/13. Strauss's *Ara-bella* with Renée Fleming wraps up on 12/15. Verdi's *La Traviata* and Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* are also on-stage this week. Call for details, or visit www.met-opera.org. • Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center (212-362-6000); \$25-\$265.

Amato Opera

Mozart's *The Magic Flute* runs weekends. 12/15-1/6. Call for details. • Amato Opera, 319 Bowery (212-228-8200); \$28.

Dicapo Opera

Presents Jules Massenet's *Werther*. 12/14-12/15 at 8; 12/16 at 4. Call for details. • Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. (212-288-9438); \$40.

Opera Company of Brooklyn

The second season gets under way with Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. 12/15 at 8. • New York City Technical College, Klitgord Auditorium, 300 Jay St., Brooklyn (718-986-3294); \$25.

Dance

New York City Ballet

George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*, a grand, inspiring production, runs through 12/31. Call for details. • New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-307-4100); \$16-\$88.

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Highlights of the twenty-dance season include *Here . . . Now*, a new work by Judith Jamison in tribute to Olympic athlete Florence Griffith Joyner, with a new score by Wynton Marsalis. Brother Branford's music shows up in *Serving Nia*, a new Ronald K. Brooks work fusing ballet, modern, hip-hop, and African dance. Call for details. 12/10-12/31. • City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212); \$25-\$75.

Doug Varone and Dancers

Fifteenth-anniversary season features three premieres, including Varone's *Ballet Mécanique*, set to George Antheil's 1926 score for player pianos, airplane propellers, telephones, and timpani, the full-company Trio in B Major Opus 8, set to Brahms, and the jazz- and blues-influenced *As Natural as Breathing*, featuring a solo by Varone. 12/11-12/16. Call for details. • The Joyce Theater, Eighth Ave. at 19th St. (212-242-0800); \$38.

San Diego Dance Theater

Jean Isaacs's company presents *A Geography of Risk*, a not-so-heavy look at how we deal with risk, taking text from Garrison Keillor's *Don Juan* and tour books. Program also features works by Rui Horta and former Isaacs student Monica Bill Barnes. 12/14-12/16 at 8:30. • Danspace Project, St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-674-8194); \$15.

Ballett Frankfurt

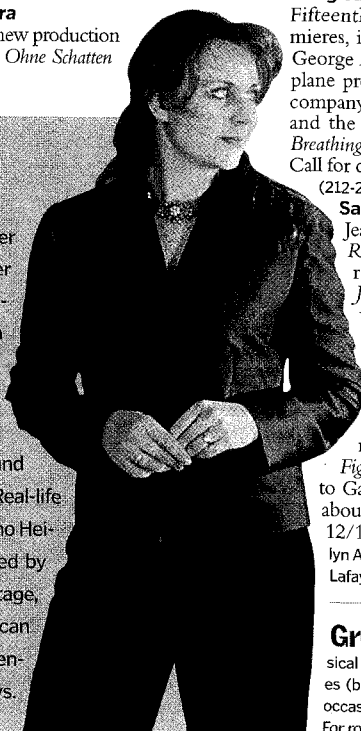
American expat William Forsythe's company presents the U.S. premieres of *Enemy in the Figure*, for which lighting is key, and *Quintett*, set to Gavin Bryars's *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*, about rapture, dread, longing, and love. 12/14-12/15, 12/18-12/20 at 7:30; 12/16 at 3. • Brooklyn Academy of Music, Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. (718-646-4100); \$20-\$50.

Ground Rules This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Premiere

Sing, O Moos!

If Hermes, son of Zeus, hadn't stolen those cows from big brother Apollo, we wouldn't have music. **The Cows of Apollo**, composer Christopher Theofanidis and librettist William M. Hoffman's much-modernized comic adaptation of the Greek myth about the invention of music, has its premiere this week by the Brooklyn Philharmonic at BAM, in a program focusing on Greek dances, philosophy, and mythology. Theofanidis, 33, teaches at the Peabody Conservatory and Juilliard, and his score is inflected with touches of heavy metal and baroque-style music—though ultimately, he says, melody prevails. Real-life rock singer Mark DiCarlo is Hermes, and the justly ubiquitous soprano Heidi Grant Murphy (pictured) is his mother, the nymph Maia, scorned by Zeus. Theofanidis says he relished the chance to draw from his heritage, and Greek-Americans are embracing him in turn: The North American archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church will be on hand to give opening remarks. "I've always had an affinity for Greek music," he says. "There's a deep connection there." (See "Classical Music.") A.Z.



Concerts

Blues Traveler

12/16 at 7:30. Front man John Popper is slimmer, but his band's jams—think the *funk* roots band Blues Hammer in *Ghost World*—remain gassy and excessive. • Rose-land Ballroom, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). \$22.50.

King Crimson

12/13–12/14 at 8. Arty seventies rock at its least windy. This reunion tour features all original members including the wonderfully kinetic guitarist Adrian Belew. • Beacon Theatre, 74th St. and Broadway (212-307-7171). \$35–\$65.

Lynyrd Skynyrd

12/11–12/12 at 8. The southern rockers march on in what must be their hundredth incarnation. • Beacon Theatre, 74th St. and Broadway (212-307-7171). \$40–\$60.

"Paul Winter's 22nd Annual Winter Solstice Celebration"

12/13–12/14 at 7:30; 12/15 at 2 and 7:30. • The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, 1047 Amsterdam Ave., at 112th St. (212-662-2133). \$65 for reserved seats; \$29 and \$39 for general admission.

"Z-100's Jingle Ball"

12/13 at 8. With Jewel; Alicia Keys; Craig David; Pink; Sugar Ray; Lifehouse; more. An annual concert chock-

show. 12/17: Classic hair metal—and probably more than a few tales of eighties excess—with former Mötley Crüe lead singer Vince Neil. • 243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).

Bottom Line

12/14–12/15: The Downtown Messiah. 12/17: "The Music of Frank Zappa" performed by the Ed Palermo Big Band. • 15 W. 4th St. (212-228-6300).

Bowery Ballroom

12/10: Starsailor. 12/12: *Paris Review* benefit with Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore; the Magnetic Fields; Rick Moody; Michael Cunningham. 12/13: Lit. 12/14: The Philadelphia Experiment. 12/15: Rival Schools. 12/16: The Philadelphia Experiment. 12/17: Neo-soul man Bilal. • 6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).

Fez

Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Saturdays: John Kelly's "Shiny Hot Nights: More Songs of Joni Mitchell." 12/10: Broadway Cares. 12/11: Julianna Nash Ruby Red Christmas Party. 12/14 and 12/16: Jackie Beat: "Merry @#\$\$%^&* Christmas." 12/17: The Haloes. • Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).

Irving Plaza

12/12: Psychedelic Brits Mercury Rev. 12/13: Tenuous downtown rockers Blonde Redhead. • 17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).

The Queers; the Figs. 12/16: Myra Melford's Equi-Interest. 12/17: Josh Roseman Unit with special guest D.J. Logic. • 74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). \$.

Maxwell's

Through 12/16: Yo La Tengo. • 1039 Washington St. Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).

Mercury Lounge

12/10: Mike Viola and the Candy Butchers. 12/11: The Miami Relatives. 12/12: Yeah Yeah Yeahs. 12/13: The Realistics; Six Parts Seven. 12/14: Paul Ruderman Band. 12/15: Slobberbone; Say Zu Zu. 12/16: The Voo Bondies; Lo-Hi. • 217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).

S.O.B.'s

12/11: Reggae diva Sister Carol. 12/12: Hip-hop collagist D.J. Krush; south-of-the-border experimental electronica outfit Nortec Collective, equal parts Eddi Palmieri and Brian Eno. 12/15: "Samba Saturday." 204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).

The Village Underground

12/14: Marshall Crenshaw. 12/15: Lalah Hathaway. 130 W. 3rd St. (212-777-7745).

Clubs

APT

An apartment-themed lounge with a surprisingly gooc lineup of hip-hop, soul, and house and D.J.'s. Mondays: Bobbito Garcia. Tuesdays: Jaymz Nylon. Wednesdays: *Fader* magazine presents Rich Medina. Thursdays: Small Change. Fridays: Ursula 1000. Saturdays: Chairmar. Mao and Citizen Kane. • 419 W. 13th St. (212-414-4245).

Baktun

Thursdays: The best deal in clubland: House great Tony Humphries for free. The first Friday of every month: Rotating house-music D.J.'s spin at "Confusion." Third Friday: Eclectic dance music with D.J. Wayne Pate at "Soularium." Fourth Friday: Icelandic promoters Holmar and A. Gram's supercool "N'Ice." Saturdays: Drum 'n' bass at "Direct Drive." Thursdays: Deep house with D.J. Jaymz Nylon. • 418 W. 14th St. (212-206-1590).

Centro-Fly

Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions," with D.J. Erick Morillo and big-name special guests. Fridays: "GBH" hosts some of the more adventurous nights at the club with D.J.'s like Ashley Beedle and Marshall Jefferson. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant"; in the Pinky Room, Chez Music honcho Neil Aline hosts "We and the Music." 12/14: New York house-music icon Roger Sanchez, currently making a bid for Daft Punk/Stardust stature with the cheesy retro-disco of "Another Chance." 12/15: Enduringly great techno innovator Derrick May. • 45 W. 21st St. (212-627-7770).

Groovejet

Mondays: Classic soul and funk. Tuesdays: Funky, San Francisco-styled house music. Wednesdays: Techno upstart David Hollands. Thursdays: Jackie Christie. Fridays: Danny Tenaglia acolyte Dan Barnes. • 286 Spring St. (212-929-4870).

Luxx

Fridays: Afro-funk with Antibalas. Saturdays: D.J. Larry Tee spins electroclash at "Berliniamburg." Sundays: "House Music Sessions" with D.J. Raji K; D.J. Gomi. Mondays: "Cult Movie Mondays." Tuesdays: D.J. Miss Guy spins rock and metal at "Hell Bent for Brooklyn." • 256 Grand Street, Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-1000).

The Roxy

Saturdays: The Chelsea boys dance all night to a rotating set of house D.J.'s. • 515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). \$.

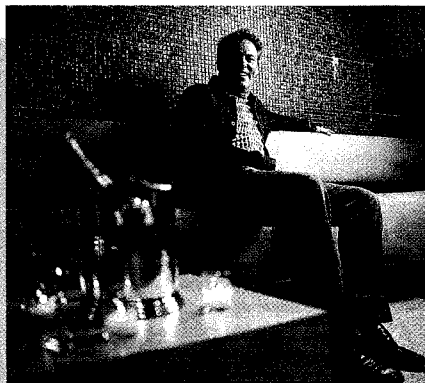
Shine

Tuesdays: Brazilian music with Ze Luis. Thursdays: The gloriously great D.J. Ron Trent and special guests like

Opening Jet, Propelled

It is, to put it mildly, not the best time to open a nightclub. Even setting aside the recession, attendance at clubs is way down since September 11. And even before the attacks, a string of club closures had nightlifers so distraught that their mood seemed summed up best by the dance single "It's Over" by the Hungry Wives, featuring Sketch Queen, which proclaims, "The scene is dead." "It's horrible right now," acknowledges Greg Brier (pictured), who's opening **Groovejet** in the space formerly occupied by the Jet Lounge on December 10, "but I think what we're doing will counter a lot of what's wrong with nightclubs." Brier's tonic for New York nightlife? "A club that emphasizes music, not promoters"; a promising mix of D.J.'s, from club-scene stalwart Jackie Christie to minimal-techno upstart David Hollands; and funky décor that, according to Brier, "resembles what Cary Grant's apartment would look like in the fifties." Brier has the pedigree to pull the venture off: Opened in 1993 in South Beach, the original Groovejet helped usher in D.J. culture to the then-fledgling Miami club scene. And he realizes that New York nightlife has grown stratified in the last decade, with Moombas for the well-heeled and Twilos for dance devotees. "Groovejet will have a truly mixed crowd," Brier promises. "You'll see billionaires mixing with club kids. That's what New York is all about."

E.B.



full of pop stars of the moment that's shockingly good at taking the temperature of Generation TRL. Pop-music empires are built—and destroyed—on the reaction of this audience. • Madison Square Garden, Seventh Avenue at 33rd St. (212-307-7171). \$60–\$150.

Small Stages

B.B. King Blues Club & Grill

12/12: Jack Bruce and the Cuicoland Express. 12/15–12/16: "Ronnie Spector's Christmas Party Volume 8." The former Ronette and Phil Spector muse returns with her thankfully unsappy annual Christmas

Joe's Pub

12/12: Johnny Cunningham and Susan McKeown; Indian-influenced breakbeats with Karsh Kale. 12/15: "Betty: 2001 Space Holidays." New show from the a cappella trio with special guests like Toshi Reagon and Maggie Moore. 12/16: The Weimarband. 12/17: Kate's Chink-O-Rama. • 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).

Knitting Factory

12/10: "International Pop Overthrow Festival" with King Fly; Rocket Transfer Warehouse; Montgomery Cliffs; more. 12/11: "International Pop Overthrow Festival" with the Vague; Bubble; Phil Angotti and the Idea; more. 12/12: Steve Wynn. 12/13: Marc Ribot y Los Cubanitos Postizos. 12/14: Genitorturers. 12/15:

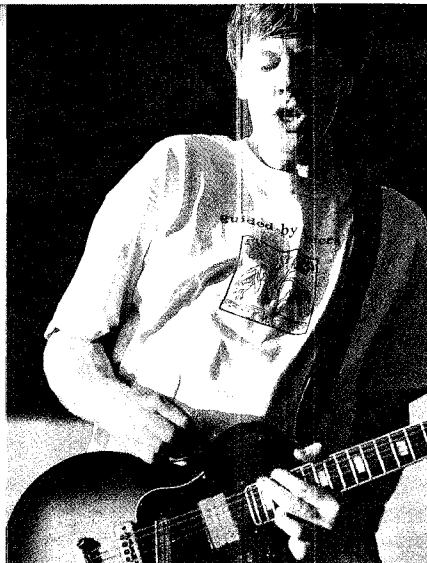


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Words and Music

Perhaps inspired by Dave Eggers's merger of a reading and a They Might Be Giants performance this past spring, *The Paris Review* is hosting its own night of words and music at Bowery Ballroom—where the Eggers affair took place—on December 12. This one promises to be a bit less ironic than the *McSweeney's* event, with Sonic Youth's Thurston Moore (pictured) and Kim Gordon and short-story maestros Rick Moody and Mary Gaitskill sharing the stage. (See "Small Stages.")



hil Asher and Norman Jay. Fridays: House, techno, and dance DJ's unite for "Touch." Saturdays: DJ. Big Ben joins hip-hop at "The Show." • 285 W. Broadway (212-941-900).

PA
Wednesdays: Rock and roll spun by DJ's like Paul Seigny. Thursdays: A-listers and fashionistas take over with "Ultra," featuring hip-hop, house, and rock and roll spun by DJ's Mark Ronson, Lady Bunny, Cameron Douglas. Saturdays: Overdressed Euros line up for "Jet Set" with DJ. Eric LaPeau. • 76 E. 13th St. (212-88-1060).

vinyl
Fridays: "Be Yourself" with progressive-house maestro DJ. Danny Tenaglia. Sundays: François K, Joe Clausell, and Danny Krivit spin at the legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Thankfully, the crowd has thinned a bit lately, leaving plenty of room for dancing. 12/15: Washington, D.C.-based progressive-house duo Deep Dish, known for its marathon sets. • 107 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).

Jazz

Birdland
12/11: "Cubarama," an Afro-jazz orchestra directed by Rudy Calzado. 12/12: NYU Jazz Orchestra directed by Jim McNeely. 12/13–12/15: Benny Golson Quartet. In December: Mondays, from 5:30 to 7:30: The Scott Whitfield Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays, from 5:30 to 7:30: David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Centennial Band. Fridays, from 5:30 to 7:30: Lew Anderson's All-American Big Band. • 315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).

Blue Note
12/10: The club's star-filled twentieth-anniversary celebration. Sets at 8 and 10:30. • 131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).

"Highlights in Jazz" Presents: "Keepers of the Flame"
12/13 at 8: With Kevin Mahogany; Christian McBride Band. • Pace Downtown Theater, 3 Spruce St. (212-3346-1715). \$22.50.

Iridium
Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. 12/11–12/16: David Murray Octet. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. • 1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121).

"Jazz Insights" Presents: "The Vocalists"
Lecture-and-music series hosted by Arnold Jay Smith, Tuesdays from 7:45 to 9:30. 12/11: Jeanie Bryson. • New School University, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5690). \$35.

Red Blazer

In December: Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz

Band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenthal's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. • 32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).

Smoke

12/10: Jam Session with John Farnsworth. 12/11: "Hammond B3 Organ Grooves." 12/12: Hot Pants Funk Sextet Plus One. 12/13: Jim Rotondi & David Hazeltine's Electric Band. • 2751 Broadway, at 105th St. (212-864-6662)

Tonic

Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 12/10: Judy Elkan & Kristen Kosmas' Little Theatre. 12/14: Jane Ira Bloom; David Gilmore's Kindred Spirits. 12/15: Derek Bailey, John Zorn, Joey Baron & Reggie Workman. 12/16: Green Roofops; Matt Keating; the Sharp Things. • 107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). \$.

Up Over Jazz Cafe

Mondays in December: "Jam Session" with the Vincent Herring Quartet. Tuesdays: "Vocal Jam Session" with Enos Payne and Circumference. Thursdays: Oleg Butman Trio. 12/14–12/15: Ronnie Matthews Quintet. • Up Over Jazz Cafe, 351 Flatbush Ave., Park Slope, Brooklyn (718-398-5413).

Village Vanguard

12/11–12/16: Standards bearer and piano classicist Bill Charlap with his trio. • 178 Seventh Ave. S., at W. 11th St. (212-255-4037). \$.

Comedy

Carolines on Broadway

Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 12/11–12/14: Identical-twin stand-up comics the Sklar Brothers, whose rough act is compared to everyone from the Beastie Boys to Jackie Mason. 12/14–12/16: Brian Regan. • 1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100). \$12.50–\$24.50; two-drink minimum.

Comedy Cellar

A coffee-house-style comedy club that hosts comics from the *Letterman*–*Chris Rock Show*–*SNL* axis. 12/10–12/16: Colin Quinn; Godfrey; Greg Giraldo;

Performance

Old Man Winter

Billed as having "more significance than ever before"—and what doesn't these days?—New Age maestro Paul Winter's annual **Winter Solstice Celebration** returns to the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine. If the evening of jazz fusion inflected with back-to-the-earth spiritualism doesn't move your jaded soul, the effects (a spinning Christmas tree, a gong player perched high in the air, a free-floating globe) will at least bring out your inner Pink Floyd fan. (See "Concerts.")

Reggie McFadden; Billy Burr; Jim Norton. • 117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).

Dangerfield's

12/10–12/16: Pete Correale; Jerry Diner; Nancy Redman; Hood; Richie Byrne; Gregory Rogell. Shows Friday at 9 and 11:15; Saturday at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sunday to Thursday, continuous from 8:45. Cover is \$15 Friday and Saturday (\$20 for 10:30 Saturday show), \$12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. • 1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).

Gotham

12/12: Gotham All-Stars. 12/14–12/15: Mitch Fatel; Jim Gaffigan; Louis Ramey; Tom Cotter. Every Tuesday and Sunday: New Talent Showcase; Wednesdays: With Robert Klein. Sunday to Thursday at 8:30 with a \$10 cover; Friday and Saturday at 8:30 and 10:30 with a \$15 cover. Two-drink minimum. • 34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel

12/11–12/12: Andrea Marcovicci. An unabashed traditionalist known for hewing close to the songbooks of Berlin and Kern, but her soulfulness and reverence for the material is winning. (Early shows Tuesday through Saturday, late shows Friday and Saturday). • 59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).

Arci's Place

Mondays in December: Christine Ebersole: "Live in New York." • 450 Park Ave. S., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).

Don't Tell Mama

In December: Thursdays at 6: Seth's Broadway Chatterbox. Saturdays at 8:30: Poole Party Comedy Variety Show; at 11: "Judy Garland Live!" with Tommy Femia. • 343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). \$.

Feinstein's at the Regency

Through 12/22: Michael Feinstein's holiday show "A Holiday in New York." Tuesday through Saturday, the cover is \$60; two shows on Friday and Saturday. • 540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).

Judy's

12/10: Eastern Standard Time. 12/11: Peter Rapanaro in "The Secret of Christmas." 12/12: Leonard Mckenzie. 12/13: Richard Skipper in "An Evening With Carol Channing and Friends." 12/14: "TeddyCare 2001." 12/15: Judy Kreston and David Lahm reprise "In the Center Ring: Songs of the Circus." 12/16: Julie Reyrburn in "Juletide Greetings." 12/17: "Leer Mondays." • 169 Eighth Ave., near 18th St. (212-929-5410).



Ground Rules In clubland, promptness is not next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. \$ = cash only.

Radio Highlights

"I'm From New Jersey"

On the birthday of Frank Sinatra, the Jersey folk station devotes a day of programming to homegrown talent. Frank takes the noon slot. • 12/12, all day. WFUV, 90.7 FM. **31st Annual Jonathan Schwartz Christmas Show** "American Standards" host Schwartz invites his favorite musicians and performers to an in-studio holiday soirée. • 12/16 at noon. WNYC, 820 AM and 93.9 FM.

Sue Miller

The acclaimed author of *The World Below* talks about her novel with the eponymous host of "The Lewis Burke Frumkes Show." • 12/16 at 8 P.M. WPAT, 930 AM.

Lectures and Panels

"Women & War in Afghanistan"

Following a screening of Mohsen Makhmalbaf's film *Kandahar*, the movie's star Nelofer Pazira and a few scholars and activists discuss recent events. Proceeds go to Afghan-women's relief groups, with an optional reception beforehand at an Afghan restaurant. • 12/11, reception 5:30 P.M. Pamir Restaurant, 1437 Second Ave., at 75th St.; \$100 to \$1,000 entire evening. Screening/panel only: 8 P.M. Clearview Cinema, 239 E. 59th St. (212-946-5469); \$45.

"Walking the High Line"

Celebrating the publication and exhibition of Joel Sternfeld's series on the overgrown railroad over Chelsea, the group "Friends of the High Line" organizes a reception and reading by Adam Gopnik, who wrote the book's introduction. • 12/11 at 6 P.M. Pace/MacGill Gallery, 534 W. 25th St. (212-759-7999); free.

Tribute to Manny Farber

Greil Marcus, Robert Polito, Luc Sante, and others pay homage to the American painter and film critic. • 12/11 at 7 P.M. 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5488); \$5.

"Civil Obedience"

A panel on media self-censorship in times of crisis welcomes Kurt Andersen, *Harper's* editor Lewis Lapham, John Podhoretz, John R. MacArthur, and Al Jazeera's Hafez Al-Mizari to hash out the issues, with radio host Brian Lehrer moderating. • 12/12 at 7 P.M. The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5488); free.

"Christians, Muslims, and Jews"

A discussion about three faiths practiced in the city's Arab neighborhoods emphasizes the similarities in customs and beliefs. • 12/16 at 2 P.M. Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672); \$7.

Bill O'Reilly

The incendiary Emmy-winning TV correspondent talks to radio host Leonard Lopate about his new book, *The No Spin Zone*. • 12/16 at 7:30 P.M. 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); \$22.

"The War Against Terrorism: What Rules Apply?"

George Lopez, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, moderates a panel that includes Princeton law professor Richard Falk, Mount Holyoke's Sohail Hashmia, Johns Hopkins' Ruth Wedgewood, and Sarah Lawrence Middle Eastern Studies chair Fawaz Gerges. • 12/17 at 8:15 P.M. 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-415-5500); \$22.

The Written Word

Mitch Albom

The author of the ridiculously persistent best-seller *Tues-*

days With Morrie signs copies. • 12/11 at 12:30 P.M. Barnes Noble, 600 Fifth Ave., at 48th St. (212-765-0592); free.

"Inside the Plaza"

Ward Morehouse III, author of *Inside the Plaza: An Intimate Portrait of the Ultimate Hotel*, reads from his book and signs copies. • 12/12 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (212-595-6859); free.

"Remembering Cuba"

Four Cuban-American authors—Andrea O'Reil Herrera, Isabel Alvarze Borland, Gustavo Perez Firma and Pablo Medina—read from their work and participate in a panel discussion titled "The Road Not Taken: Cultural Identity in Cuban-American Writing." • 12/13 at 6 P.M. The Americas Society, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. (212-249-8950, ext. 369); \$5.

Joseph Brodsky Memorial Reading

Seamus Heaney, Anthony Hecht, Glyn Maxwell, Pat Muldoon, and Derek Walcott read from their translations in *Nativity Poems*, a collection of previously untranslated Christmas poems by the late exiled Soviet poet (and Jew) Joseph Brodsky. Proceeds from the benefit go to a memorial fellowship fund that sends Russian artists and scholars to study in Rome. • 12/13 at 6:30 P.M. Peter B. Lewis Theater, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-645-3346); \$40-\$75.

Lynn Sherr

The author talks about and signs copies of her book *America the Beautiful: The Stirring True Story Behind Our Nation's Favorite Song*. • 12/13 at 7 P.M. Barnes & Noble, 197 Broadway, at 66th St. (212-595-6859); free.

Strange Stories for Strange Kids

The artists and writers behind a collection of odd children's comics—Art Spiegelman, Françoise Mouly, Kaz Paul Auster, and Ian Falconer—sign copies of their work. • 12/13 at 7 P.M. Shakespeare & Co., 716 Broadway, at Washington Pl. (212-529-1330); free.

Kenneth Kusmer

The author reads from and discusses his new book *Down and Out, On the Road: The Homeless in American History*. • 12/13 at 7 P.M. Housing Works, 126 Crosby St. (212-334-3324); free.

"City of Fiction"

The Poetry Project's Friday-night reading series continues with onetime MTV talker Maggie Estep as well as writers Alan Goldsher, John Keene, and Victor D LaValle. • 12/14 at 10:30 P.M. Poetry Project at St. Marks Church, 131 E. 10th St. (674-0910); \$7.

"The Gathering: The Barbershop Scene"

Playwright and performance artist Will Power interprets his own play about African-American interactions in a barbershop. • 12/15 and 12/16 at 7 P.M. The Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500, ext. 264 for recommended reservations); \$7.

Jewish Book Month Talk

Four authors talk about their standout books: Sheila Isenberg (*A Hero of Our Own*), Sam Roberts (*The Brother*), Joseph Berger (*Displaced Persons*), and Ralph Blumenthal (*The Stork Club*). The *Times*' Clyde Haberman moderates. • 12/16 at 11 A.M. Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, 30 W. 68th St. (212-877-4050); \$15.

Special Events

Tours

An Architectural History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

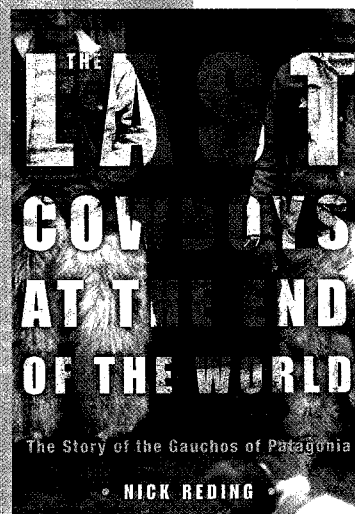
A colossus of culture whose architectural splendor is often overlooked, the Met is given a good once-over by tour leader Arthur Rosenblatt, who leads you from the museum's 1870 opening to the addition of sleek

In Print

Reding Reading

Nick Reding doesn't do any big-game hunting himself—"I wouldn't shoot more than I could eat," he says—but he'd know what to look for if he did. "That's a kudu, that's a woodland caribou, that's a pronghorn antelope, and that's a tundra caribou," he says, pointing at an array of seemingly identical mounted heads on a wall at the Explorers Club. Reding may know his antlers, but he doesn't look the pith-helmeted Explorers Club type (for one thing, there are his bright-blue suede loafers). Nevertheless, his new book, *The Last Cowboys at the End of the World* (Crown; \$24), is the kind of true-adventure tale that the club's membership will probably snap up. Rich in literal cliff-hangers—Reding spends his first-ever hours on horseback teetering on winding, plunging mountain roads—*The Last Cowboys* describes the life of gauchos in an isolated part of Patagonia known as Middle Cisnes. The dramatic plot has attracted interest from Miramax and DreamWorks, but it's Reding's writerly voice that's drawn adulatory advance press: *Publishers Weekly* went so far as to compare him favorably to his idol, Cormac McCarthy. Quite a payoff, considering that during research in Patagonia, he'd cracked two ribs, suffered a bout of dysentery, lost twenty pounds, and almost got his throat slit. Nevertheless, "I think it's ridiculous when people start going on about that 'tough writer' thing," says Reding. For months following the threat on his life, he suffered anxiety so severe that he was afraid his sister would have him committed when he finally told her the extent of his mania. On the way over to her house to bare his soul, he says, "I wore my New Balance sneakers." He flicks an ash from his cigarette and laughs. "I was ready to run."

SUSAN DOMINUS



ew wings a few years back. • 12/12 at 2 P.M. Call 212-415-500 for reservations and meeting place; \$30.

Mount Vernon Hotel Candlelight Tour

A trip through the nineteenth-century house offers period rooms and cider as well as seasonal music on a hammered dulcimer. • 12/13 through 12/15, every 45 minutes from 4:30 to 7:30 P.M. Mount Vernon Hotel Museum, 421 61st St. (212-838-6878, reservations required); \$10.

How New York Transformed Kris Kringle

ites including those associated with Thomas Nast and Washington Irving trace the standardization and commodification of Santa via his New York handlers. • 12/15 and 12/16, noon and 2:30 P.M. Call 212-465-3331 for reser-

the attacks, as well as Bruce Mosler, president of Cushman & Wakefield's U.S. operations. • 12/13 at 6 P.M. Intrepid Sea-Air Space Museum, Pier 86, Twelfth Ave. at 46th St. (212-957-7024); tables \$10,000 and up.

Comedy for Guerrilla Girls Theatre

Racy girl comics like Judy Gold, Sue Costello, and Kate Rigg perform a benefit show with proceeds going to the equally racy Guerrilla Girls theatre troupe (a feminist group sporting gorilla masks). • 12/16 at 7 P.M. Gotham Comedy Club, 34 W. 22nd St. (212-766-2606); reservations required, \$25-\$100.

Varla-La-La-La-La, La-La-La-La

The entertainer Varla Jean Merman (sort of a poor man's Hedwig) belts out a holiday concert with the assistance of Kristine Zbornik, the Kinsey Sicks, and others. Proceeds benefit Gold's Love We Deliver. • 12/17 at 8 P.M. Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-307-4100); \$25-\$75.

Happening

Getting High

Joel Sternfeld's eerily beautiful series **Walking the High Line** (including, pictured, *Looking*

South on a May Evening, 2000) may help the fight to save and reuse the abandoned railway snaking along the lower West Side—but whether the line is restored or destroyed, its peaceful elevated fields are likely to soon be a thing of the past. The nonprofit Friends of the High Line celebrates the opening of Sternfeld's exhibit at the Pace/MacGill—a block from the railway itself—and the publication of the accompanying book, with a reading by essayist Adam Gopnik, who wrote the elegiac introduction. (See "Lectures and Panels" for details.)

rations and meeting place; \$13.

Historic Harlem

Learn about the neighborhood's culture, architecture, and people past and present while visiting the Abyssinian Baptist Church, Strivers Row, and former haunts of Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes. • 12/15 at 1 P.M. Meet at the Shornburg Center, northwest corner of Lenox Ave. and 135th St. (212-439-1090); \$12.

Christmas Lights at Dyker Heights

The height of Christmas décor (or kitsch, depending on your perspective) can be found in this neighborhood nestled between Bensonhurst and Bay Ridge, where a musically accompanied front-yard diorama of *A Christmas Carol* competes with a *Nutcracker* danced by ten-foot-tall ballerinas. The tour ends, naturally, at an Italian karaoke restaurant. • 12/15 at 7 P.M. Call 212-415-5500 for reservations; \$90 including transportation.

Art Tour of St. John the Divine

As demonstrated by your guide, Kathryn Filla, the unconventional church yields surprises far beyond arches and stained glass: Italian Renaissance paintings, Russian icons, and an altarpiece by Keith Haring. • 12/16 at 1:30 P.M. St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (212-932-7347 for reservations); \$5.

Benefits

Paris Review Benefit Concert/Reading

A benefit reading and performance, with writers including Rick Moody, Mary Gaitskill, and Michael Cunningham and indie rockers including Thurston Moore and Stephin Merritt, helps Asociacion Tepeyac, which is coordinating relief efforts for undocumented immigrants affected by 9/11. • 12/12 at 8:30 P.M. Bowery Ballroom, 6 Delancey St. (212-866-7619); \$20.

Auction for Hope

A live auction of more than 50 works by artists like Mikhail Chemiakin, Philip Heying, and Alexander Zakharov benefits the UJA-Federation's Community Poverty Fund. • 12/13 at 6 P.M. Ramscale Loft, 463 West St. (212-836-1537); \$30 minimum.

Tenth Annual "Salute to Freedom"

The *Intrepid* hosts an awards ceremony, silent auction, and benefit party honoring Giuliani, the NYPD, NYFD, and other city agencies who helped during

Events

American Folk Art Museum Open House

Opening its snazzy new digs across from MOMA, the museum is free all day, with music from the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and, in coming weeks, talks on collecting and the art of Henry Darger (whose work is exhibited here). • 12/11, 10:30 A.M. to 6 P.M. American Folk Art Museum, 45 W. 53rd St. (212-977-1170); free.

"Winter at the Dana Discovery Center"

An innovative lighting technique illuminates the Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, in the manner of a gingerbread house, in lieu of the traditional tree—the culmination of a day of ornament-making, live music from the Boys Choir of Harlem, and other festivities. • 12/13, 4:30 to 6:30 P.M. Charles A. Dana Discovery Center, near Fifth Ave. and 110th St. in Central Park (212-310-6636); free.

Book Arts Sale and Open House

Handmade gifts—journals, greeting cards, photo albums, etc.—are available at the center's twenty-seventh annual holiday sale—also an open house for demonstrations, music, and treats. • 12/15, 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. Center for Book Arts, 28 W. 27th St. (212-481-0295); free.

"Balagan Mekori: Festival of Israeli Arts"

A daylong Hanukkah celebration is attended by Israeli artists such as DJ. Avi Karnon, singer Daphna Dove, photographer Dror Katz, filmmakers Alon David and Keren Atzmon, and others. • 12/16, 3 to 11 P.M. Makor, 35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000); \$20.

Sports

Hot Chocolate 15K

We're guessing this race was planned back when Decembers were actually cold. Hot chocolate, bagels, T-shirts, and possibly mugs will be handed out at the finish. Concurrently, the NYRRC's Holiday Play Party for children ages 2 to 8 will feature relay races, hoola hoop and tug-of-war contests, and a visit from Mr. Claus. • Play party: 11/16, 8 to 10:30 A.M., P.S. 198, 95th St. at Lexington Ave. (212-423-2253); free. Race: 11/16 at 9:30 A.M.; Central Park, East Drive at 97th St. (212-860-4455); registration at NYRRC offices only, 9 East 89th St.; pre-registration: \$17, \$12 members; day-of: 8 to 9 A.M., \$22, \$15 members.

Solutions to last week's puzzle

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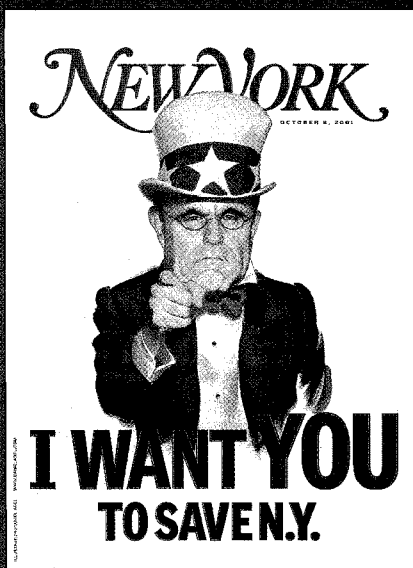
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Kids

cue

Edited by Susan Aver

Children's Events

Museum Babies

Not just another traveling exhibit... this one's a keeper. The Brooklyn Children's Museum now has an indoor, interactive play-and-discovery area for preschoolers. (See essay.) • Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. (718-735-4400 or www.brooklynkids.org); \$4.

Ice Giveaway in the Winter

Chelsea Piers likes to make New Yorkers happy. Once again, they bring back Holiday on the Hudson, a free evening of figure-skating performances and holiday music. The show stars Olympic champion Lu Chen as well as teams of award-winning ice dancers. Santa and his boy Rudolph will also make the requisite appearances. Tickets required. Immediately following the show will be free skating for all ticket-holders. • 12/14 at 7 P.M.; Sky Rink at Chelsea Piers, Pier 61, enter at 23rd St. and the West Side Hwy. (212-336-6881); free.

Reel-y Educational, Really Fun

Revel in the zaniness of Bugs Bunny and friends when they play in various operatic cartoons. In this version of "Reel to Real," Lincoln Center combines the reel with the real pianist-composer Jed Distler as the tour guide.

Babar, Onstage

Commemorating Babar's seventieth anniversary (that one old pachyderm). *The Travels of Babar* comes to the stage. The one-hour show pairs a lively classical score with the tale from author Jean de Brunhoff's second elephant story. • 12/27-12/31; Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160); \$25.

Gee, That's Gingerbread?

What makes up the classic gingerbread recipe? See larger-than-life bunnies in different stages of preparing the treat at the New York Botanical Garden. (Hint: Many of the ingredients are plant-based!) After exploring a life-size gingerbread house, kids do hands-on activities to investigate the ingredients up close. Go home with a recipe for the real deal. • Through 1/6/02 at the New York Botanical Garden, Bronx River Pkwy., exit 7V and Fordham Rd., the Bronx (718-817-8700 or www.nybg.org); \$10 grown-ups, \$7.50 students and seniors, \$4 kids 2-12.

My Yiddishe Season

Folksbiene, the Yiddish theater company, brings its new season forward with *2001: A Space Mishegas*. This free wheeling multimedia adventure uses audience participation to deliver a lesson in the language of our bubbes. • Sundays through 12/23 at 11 A.M.; Theater Four, 424 W. 55th St. (212-239-6200); \$15 grown-ups, \$12 kids 11 and younger.

Opening

A Museum Grows in Brooklyn

When a recent survey showed that the population of New York preschoolers was rising, the Brooklyn Children's Museum responded by transforming almost 2,000 square feet of exhibit space into **Totally Tots**, which opens this week. "We asked parents," says Juliet Gray-Moliere, manager of the museum's department of early childhood education, "and they said what we needed to do." The space is broken up into six distinct areas: the Baby Patch, which includes an indoor garden; the Play Pond, with shallow pools for hand-play; the Kids' Quarry, for building with foam rocks (pictured); Peek-a-Boutique, a mini general store; the Reading Lamp, filled with illustrated books; and the Parent Junction, where caregivers can watch their youngsters (while reading up on child development, of course). It sounds like a lot to handle, but, says Gray-Moliere, it's not an overwhelming environment: "Like living in your house—but with even more stuff to play with." S.A.



Met soprano Emily Pulley jams roaring arias and humorous songs. • 12/16 at 11:30 A.M. and 2 P.M.; Walter Reade Theater, 165 W. 65th St. (212-875-5570 or www.lincolncenter.org); \$16 grown-ups, \$8 kids 4-14.

Little Girl, Big Dreams

Papageno Puppet Theater is back with a run of *Thumbelina*, the story about the digit-size babe with dreams of marrying a like-size prince. • Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through 1/6/02 at 11:30 A.M. and 2 P.M.; 462 Columbus Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-874-3297); \$7.

Nutcracker Lite

If you're a parent waiting to find the perfect starter ballet for the little ones, then the one-hour version of New York Theatre Ballet's *Nutcracker* is it. New to this year's production is an acrobatic stiltwalker and juggler who adds an unexpected twist to the Russian scene. • Through 12/23; Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160); \$25 grown-ups, \$20 kids 12 and younger.

Let There Be Candlelight

Learn about holiday festivals around the world that celebrate light, including Hanukkah. Make your own candles to take home. • 12/15, 12/16, 12/22, 12/23, 12/26-12/30 from 1 to 4 P.M.; South Street Seaport Museum, 209 Water St. (212-748-8786); \$5.

Hanukkah at the Museum

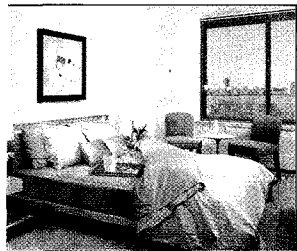
At the Yeshiva University Museum, the Hanukkah Story Theater has kids participate in a drama of the Hanukkah story. Afterward, they create their own dioramas of the story of the Maccabees. BYO shoe box. • Hanukkah Story Theater, 12/13 from 2 to 4 P.M.; Yeshiva University Museum, 15 W. 16th St. (212-294-8330); \$6 grown-ups, \$4 kids and seniors, free to kids 5 and younger.

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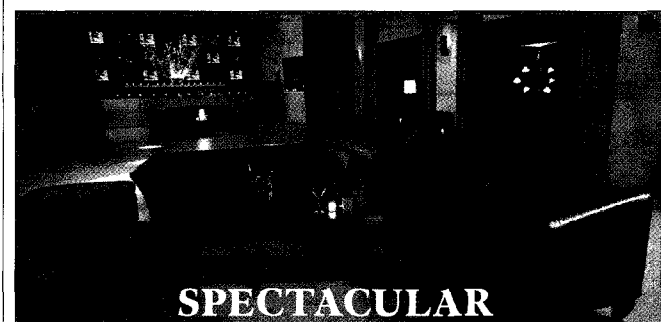
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Classy, Bright And Charming—Very attractive, sensual, Jewish LI woman, early 50s, with upbeat personality, above average smarts, a quick wit and a bit of devil in her eyes, would like to meet warm, caring and secure man with sense of humor and love of life. Note/photo appreciated. 1410 ☎

Romantic Man—65, modest means, seeks affluent woman for...ever. 1374 ☎

Beautiful, Bright—Healthy Nordic woman seeks outstanding man to father a child with and possible marriage. Kristin77@hotmail.com 1391 ☎

Affluent Young Businessman—36 years old, 5'11", 175 lbs and described as a "gorgeous man". I'm a muffin-brown-skinned biracial man with commercial-quality good looks, fine "Waspy" facial features, dark wavy hair, a perfect smile and dimples (yes, I have all my hair). I own my own business in the financial services industry and a luxury home on the North Shore of LI. I love to travel, since I don't have to work very hard anymore. I was married for a very short time before and, yes, I have one beautiful biracial daughter from that interracial union. I'm looking to "get back in there". I'm seeking a thin, pretty, white, Asian or Hispanic woman between the ages of 22 and 36. I have no problem if you're divorced or have children. That doesn't scare me like it does most guys, because I'm a man, not a guy. For you first-timers, guess what, all the good ones are not taken! I love the city, and I'm even thinking of getting an apartment there, so it's great if you live in the city. So drop me a line and I will respond to you. 1370 ☎

Take A Walk On The Wild Side—Italian-American male construction worker, 35, handsome and strong, exciting and unique personality, looking for financially independent uptown girl, age unimportant, who is tired of boring businessmen. 1408 ☎

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Warm, Witty Professional Woman—59, loves the arts, travel and the outdoors. Seeks active professional or academic mensch for love and laughter. 1379 ☎

Dangerously Addictive!—Pretty, slim, shapely blond, upbeat and affectionate, seeks tallish, witty, romantic male, 50s, who's handsome, accomplished, worldly and warm, for laughter and love. Photo. mw32skidoo@aol.com 1345 ☎

Pretty, Great Figure—Young 50s, looking for a special guy - Manhattan, tall, business or professional, 58-68. 1343 ☎

Male, 47—Sensitive, intelligent, emotionally in-touch, communicative, great sense of humor - seeks a woman with similar qualities. 1395 ☎

Very Attractive 40-Year-Old—Fit, energetic professional female looking to meet an attractive professional male, 36-44, for marriage and children. No jobless, long-term relationship or couch potatoes. Prefer phone responses. 1376 ☎

Beautiful Professor, 51—Lives in France and northern NJ, seeks high-class, successful, handsome man. Photo. 1396 ☎

Irish Guy—Artist, tall, slim, brown-hazel, nice looking, 50s, gallery owner, likes NY, animals, arts, culture, movies, books, flea and antique markets, travel, gardening. Looking for lady, 39-49, who is reasonably slim and nice-looking, open, warm, communicative, with similar interests, for relationship. Photo/note appreciated. Will reciprocate. artisticire@aol.com 1404 ☎

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20	Ski Trip Weekend 6:30 pm	21	Metropolitan Museum 3:00 pm Bourbon Tasting 8:00 pm
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Gay, Laid-Back, Hip—Country-living guy - tall, romantic, sensual, silver, 60, Hudson Valley home, pool, gardens... seeks passionate, cross-generational long-term relationship with take-charge alpha guy, 25-45, zany, cocksure, muscles and brains, daring enough to tackle a twosome with a great older guy for happily ever after! 1360 ☎

Manhattan Man—Tall, professional investor, European, slim, affluent, world traveler - seeks very pretty, slender, bright, stylish, classy woman under 55, for the best in life. Recent photo. 1367 ☎

Warm, Loving and Attractive—Westchester lady seeks soul mate. I am a 47-year-old, well-educated single mom with two wonderful sons. I am spiritual and fit, love long walks, great conversation, movies, theater, dining out, exercise and yoga. You believe in true love the second time around, are successful but not driven, have integrity and love to laugh. Westchester or NYC. 1389 ☎

Free To Play—If you are free to play tennis, golf, sail, ski and travel with a mid-50s, 5'4", attractive widow - and enjoy the arts and music, please write/call. 1357 ☎

Passionate—About jazz, loves ballroom dancing. Enjoys working out, movies, dining, travel. Westchester female, attractive, spirited, educated, compassionate. Seeking nonsmoking, fit, gentle man, 45-55, who is secure, sincere, successful. Email: Silksand927@aol.com 1412 ☎

Exceptional Value—Cute, smart, shapely blond, looking for man of my dreams, over 40. Photo, please. 1371 ☎

Pretty Female NYC Exec—In the literary field, well-traveled, independent, non-religious Jewish, witty, fun-to-be-with, slim, avid swimmer, tennis player, music buff. Seeks accomplished new friend over 55 - a man who enjoys life, conversant in many subjects, to share interest in all the arts, media, law, medicine, global affairs, spontaneous times together. Photo. 1405 ☎

Highly Attractive, Classy, Intelligent—Divorced lady with style, lively sense of humor. Financially independent. Loves the outdoors, sports, gardening, movies, theater and NYC. Treasures family and friends. Seeks man, 55-65, with similar values, to share pleasure and laughs. 1400 ☎

Beautiful, 42—Seeks attractive, warm, funny man under 50, who's been in long-term therapy or analysis. 1361 ☎

Cute, Classy—Professional female, 60, with looks, smarts, warmth, wit, seeks significant other. Photo/phone. 1348 ☎

Caring, Romantic—Good-looking, divorced physician, early 60s, 5'9", seeks attractive Jewish woman in her 50s, who is warm, caring, fun and interested in sharing everything NY has to offer in a long-term-relationship. Note/phone/photo, please. 1390 ☎

Attractive, Warm, Affectionate—Trim, 5'5", white, divorced redhead, 56, nonsmoker, would enjoy meeting physically fit, well-groomed, active, kind, intelligent, caring, nonsmoking man for long-term relationship. I am educated, professional, lively, healthy, fun-loving, with a sense of humor and a lust for life. I reside in central Jersey. If you feel we might have something in common, I would love to hear from you. 1383 ☎

Tenderness, Intellect, Sensuality—Lovely, highly educated, successful, divorced white female, artist, teacher, department head, seeking that rare man, 48 plus, who feels deeply, listens intently and expresses himself truly. Photo. E-mail: nyartist28@hotmail.com 1386 ☎

You Won't Believe This Package!—Gorgeous strawberry blond, slim, trim, athletic businesswoman - loves travel and romance - seeks sophisticated, established Jewish man in his mid 40s-early 50s, who has a joy for life and brings a lot to the table. 1372 ☎

Attractive, Gay White Female—artistic, cultured, professional, passion seeks same for romance/friends! Note/photo. paxcja@aol.com 1394 ☎

"That Girl" Seeking Jewish Donal Beautiful attorney, conservadox, seel attractive professional, 37-47. 1382 ☎

Tall, Dark, Eclectic—6'2", handsome, sexy, veterinarian, 53, reti unique, multifaceted, looking for special someone, 28-40, tall, beautiful the inside and out to share life, tra marriage, family, kids. I want it! Photo/note. maddoc48@aol.com 1414 ☎

Very Youthful 69—Active, succes businessman, Jewish, MBA, good com ny, good looks, good shape in mind body, 5'6", looking for youthful 50 lady of attractive looks and body, partake of an active, diverse, fun-fi life. Exchange photos and notes. 1397 ☎

Brunette Beauty—Slender, smart & sexy. Sophisticated, supportive, fr loving, 48. Upbeat personality, sparkl eyes, intellectually inquisitive, financi secure professional. Likes jazz clu Broadway (on/off), Italy (beauty, cultu pace of life), Sonoma, sailing. Enj opening bottle of good red wine, whipp up home-cooked dinner, relaxing. Val alone time; likes companionship. Se professional man (47-59) with a cert sophistication, generous spirit, time real relationship (5'9" plus, pleas Insgirl101@aol.com 1364 ☎

Single White Male—Professional, seeks female for relationship. 1358 ☎

Handsome, Wealthy, Jewish—Prof sional guy in NYC and NJ would le marriage and children soon. Prefer la in medicine, law, teaching, business, et 35-50. Beautiful or average is fine. E-m: sharpguy4u@aol.com 1356 ☎

Gay White Female—Educated pr fessional, many interests, seeks simil: classy, stable, nonsmoker, 45-55, g white female. 1401 ☎

Classy, Cute Blond—Outstanding figu and sweet personality, is ready to love a be loved by a 67-77-year-old man who attractive, kind and financially secur This lovely lady awaits you. 1377 ☎

Pretty—Tall, slender blond, 46, M mom of a teen, seeks nonsmokin Jewish professional, single dad, 46-5 leslie235@aol.com 1380 ☎

Male Teacher, 51—Perceptive, carin self-assured, tall and attractive, seekin female, 40-51, who likes herself, respectful of other people, and who ca communicate. Note/photo a must. 1385 ☎

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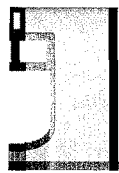
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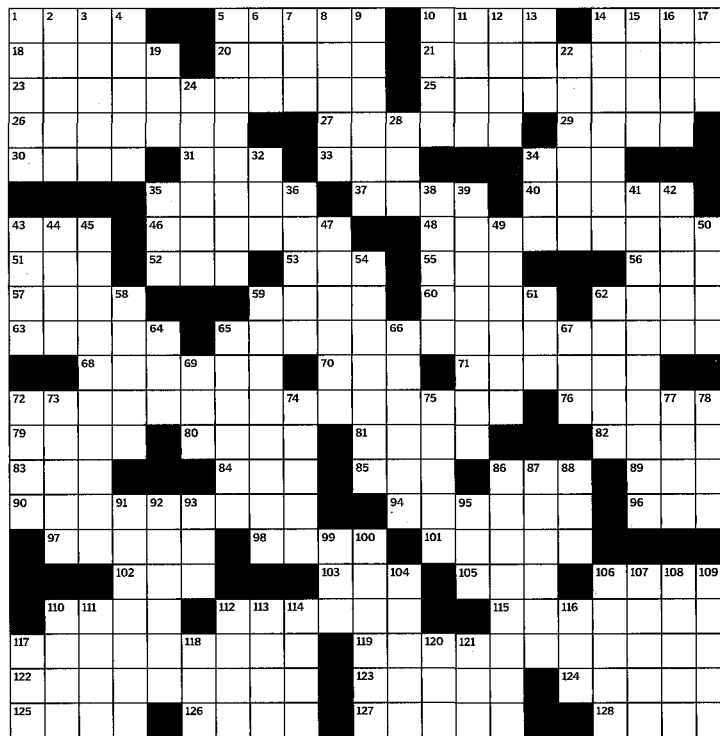
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ACROSS

- 1 Not wild
- 5 Rival of Continental
- 10 Exxon, formerly
- 14 Field yield
- 18 Gladden
- 20 Time being
- 21 Ubiquitous item, 2001
- 23 Trouble spot, 2001
- 25 Oscar film, 2001
- 26 Mosque tower
- 27 Paltry
- 29 Paid sportsmen
- 30 Penn name
- 31 Fido's doc
- 33 Future chicken
- 34 Kennedy Library architect
- 35 Chaplain, to G.I.'s
- 37 Peary's Greenland base
- 40 Maine college town
- 43 Some are classified
- 46 Name of eight English kings
- 48 Citizen in the news, 2001
- 51 Yay!
- 52 — kwon do (martial art)
- 53 Confederate Johnny
- 55 Bit of land, in the Seine
- 56 Pewter component
- 57 Memorable Guinness
- 59 Alpha follower
- 60 Soho coins, for short
- 62 Norse god of thunder
- 63 Cooperstown's Yogi
- 65 Man in the news, 2001
- 68 Obedient military response
- 70 Ending for form or spat
- 71 Minstrel-show performers
- 72 Super Bowl champs, 2001
- 76 Frasier's brother
- 79 Thrice minus twice
- 80 "Look — this way ..."
- 81 Confessor's earful
- 82 Church midsection
- 83 Rowlock holding
- 84 Simone's summertime
- 85 This is dynamite
- 86 Vat
- 89 Slangy turnaround
- 90 Word in the news, 2001
- 94 Third sign of the zodiac
- 96 TV Tarzan Ron
- 97 Horde from the hive
- 98 Ginger cookie

'Retrospective 2001' 'Cue' Crossword by Maura B. Jacobson



- 101 Send payment
- 102 Fleur-de—
- 103 1963 Paul Newman film
- 105 Private eye
- 106 Plunge a dagger
- 110 After-bath sprinkle
- 112 "Citizen Kane" actor Everett
- 115 Heroine of "Fidelio"
- 117 Nobel Peace Prize winner, 2001
- 119 Senator who switched parties, 2001
- 122 Company in the news, 2001
- 123 Realty measurements
- 124 "I'm Beginning — the Light"
- 125 Chunk of earth

- 126 Wide-flanged beam
- 127 Top Ten lists
- 128 "Thou shalt not," updated

DOWN

- 1 Athletic squads
- 2 Michael Caine role
- 3 — Carta
- 4 Actor Hawke
- 5 — Run, New York marathon slogan, 2001
- 6 Mayday call
- 7 Picnic pest
- 8 Start of Caesar's boast
- 9 Go back on a commitment
- 10 Cardiology exams: abbr.

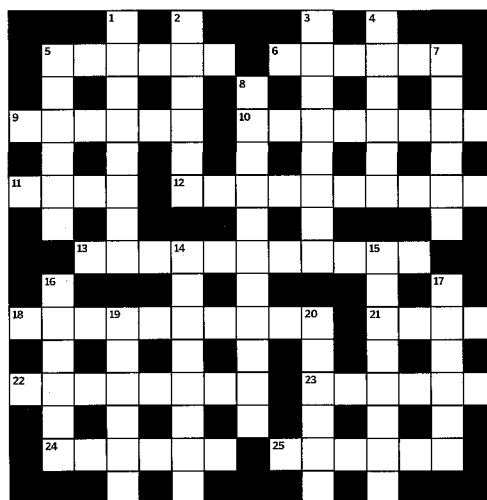
- 11 Order to the broker
- 12 Gun down
- 13 Antiquated
- 14 Ben Hur's vehicle
- 15 — Rooter
- 16 Lennon's in-laws
- 17 For each
- 19 Listen here
- 22 Kilted musicians
- 24 The Silver State
- 28 Ten-percent rep.
- 32 Before la, in a refrain
- 34 Luau food
- 35 Adopted animal
- 36 Goofed
- 38 Monkeylike

- 39 Certain lamps
- 41 Tony winner, 2001
- 42 Kitchen tearjerker
- 43 Part of U.A.R.
- 44 Hill's go-with
- 45 Grammy-winning vocalist, 2001
- 47 Roundabout route
- 49 Kline and Spacey
- 50 Letters on a crucifix
- 54 Ship-stabilizing weight
- 58 Island of the Minotaur
- 59 Mexican menu items
- 61 South: Fr.
- 62 Coordinated sale
- 64 "Unaccustomed — am . . ."
- 65 Uproar participant
- 66 Laying asphalt
- 67 Between K and O
- 69 Kin of wee, to Burns
- 72 Dunce
- 74 Diarist Nin
- 74 E'erlasting
- 75 Stage direction
- 77 Pernicious
- 78 Erotically suggestive
- 86 Streisand's Emmy-winning show, 2001
- 87 International children's org.
- 88 Snippet
- 91 Added up
- 92 Author Jong, and others
- 93 Apt. units
- 95 Encountered
- 99 Palindromic exclamation
- 100 Lahore's province
- 104 Clear the winter windshield
- 106 Kind of hair net
- 107 Human trunk
- 108 Eve who played TV's Miss Brooks
- 109 Harass
- 110 Drudgery
- 111 Hendrix hairdo
- 112 Uppity person
- 113 One of the Turners
- 114 Something unique
- 116 Frequently: poetic
- 117 Abbr. for Colonel Sanders
- 118 To the — degree
- 120 Title conferred at weddings
- 121 Boeing product

ACROSS

- 5 All-rounder in the field? (6)
- 6 Nut approaching The Oval in salmon dungarees. (6)
- 9 Condition makes lady lad, perhaps? (6)
- 10 The whole relating to fragment. (8)
- 11 See 15.
- 12 The imaginary land of hire-purchase. (5-5)
- 13 This watches for coordination in the nouveaux riches, sonny! (11)
- 18 Upset when psychedelic drugs let in. (10)
- 21 Before the crack, thrice spoken well! (1,3)
- 22 Difficult keeping divine principles for an old vixen. (8)
- 23 Lecture a non-starter for boxer: base for solution. (6)
- 24 Large 16's rib found in river. (6)
- 25 The same Poles abducted by Trotsky assassinated pop star. (6)

The 'Guardian' Crossword Set by Paul



DOWN

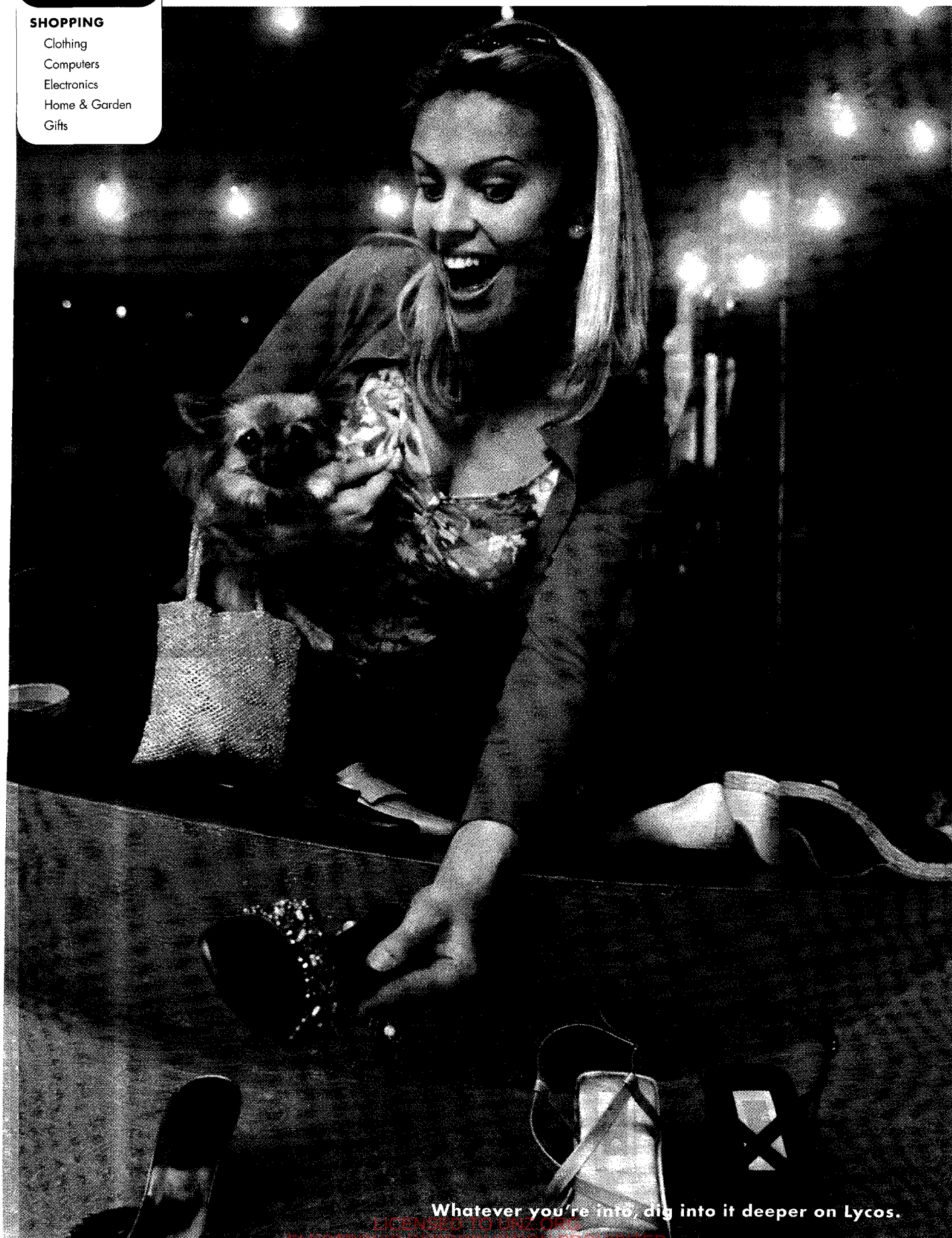
- 1 I spy H₂O and a crafty craft I spy. (4,4)
- 2 Children's writer's study about fish. (6)
- 3 Once this would press novice to pass cake around. (8)
- 4 He of Casablanca affectionately grabs love for a dance. (6)
- 5 Stress filter. (6)
- 7 Nappy, having settled once more, pulled up. (6)
- 8 Track money, counterfeit notes. (11)
- 14 Dracula almost comes to grief on witches' pot. (8)
- 15, 11 As one who made his fortune muck-racking might be? (8,4)
- 16 Cornish head with one end smothered in fat. (6)
- 17 Fish with wings in the sea. (6)
- 19 Bug an old adversary. (6)
- 20 Without right lead, connected up. (6)



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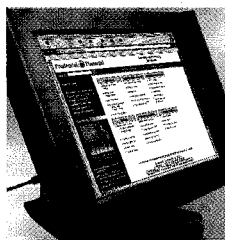
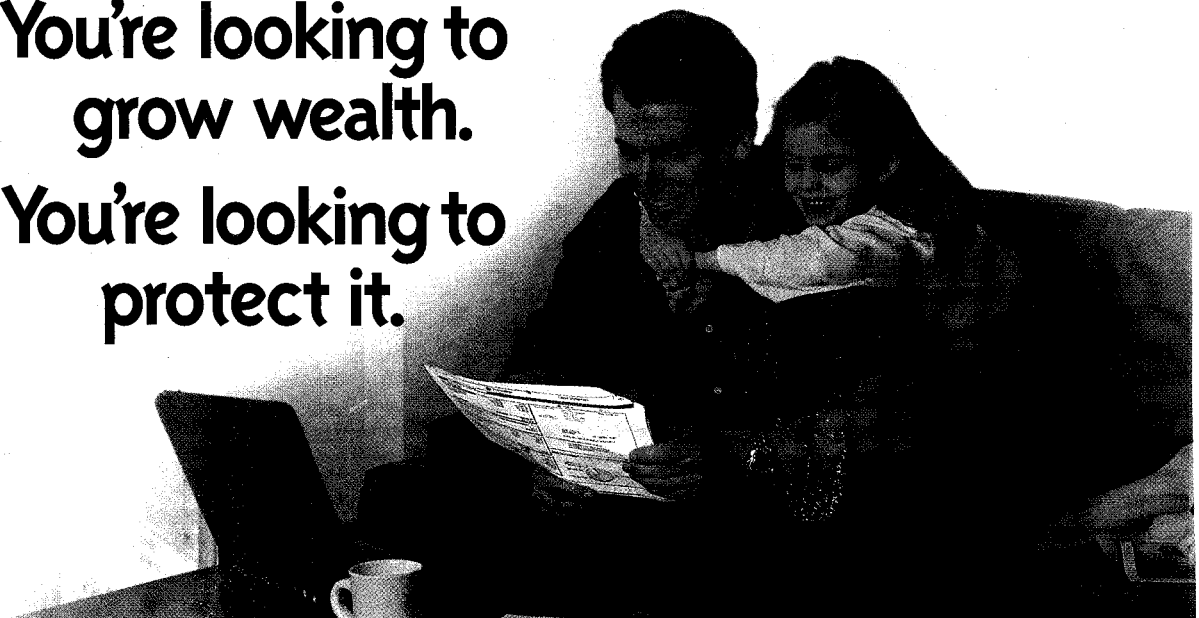
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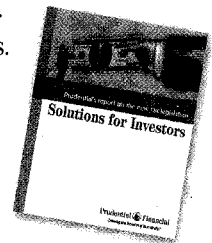
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